# GHOST IN THE SHELL
# 攻殻機動隊

SHIROW MASAMUNE

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# GHOST IN THE SHELL

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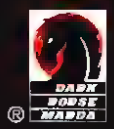


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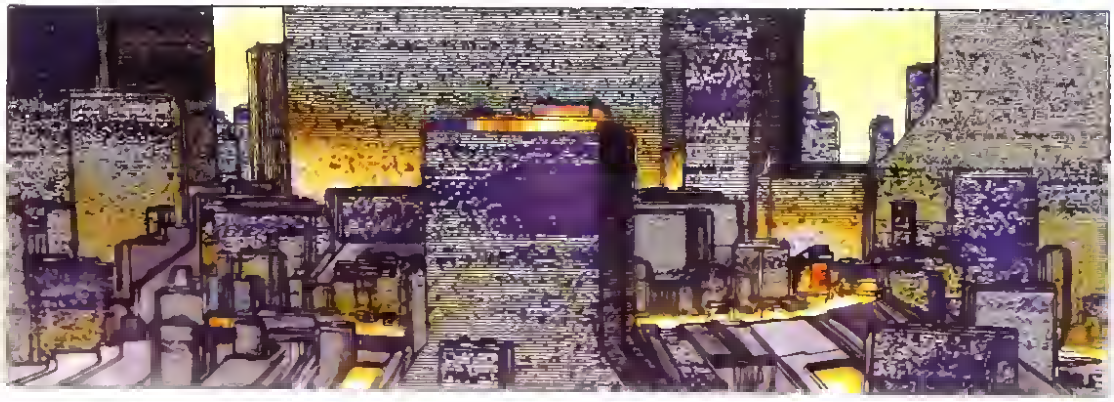
It is the near future. The world has become highly information-intensive, with a vast corporate network covering the planet, electrons and light pulsing through it. But the nation-state and ethnic groups still survive.

And on the edge of Asia, in a strange corporate conglomerate-state called "Japan"...



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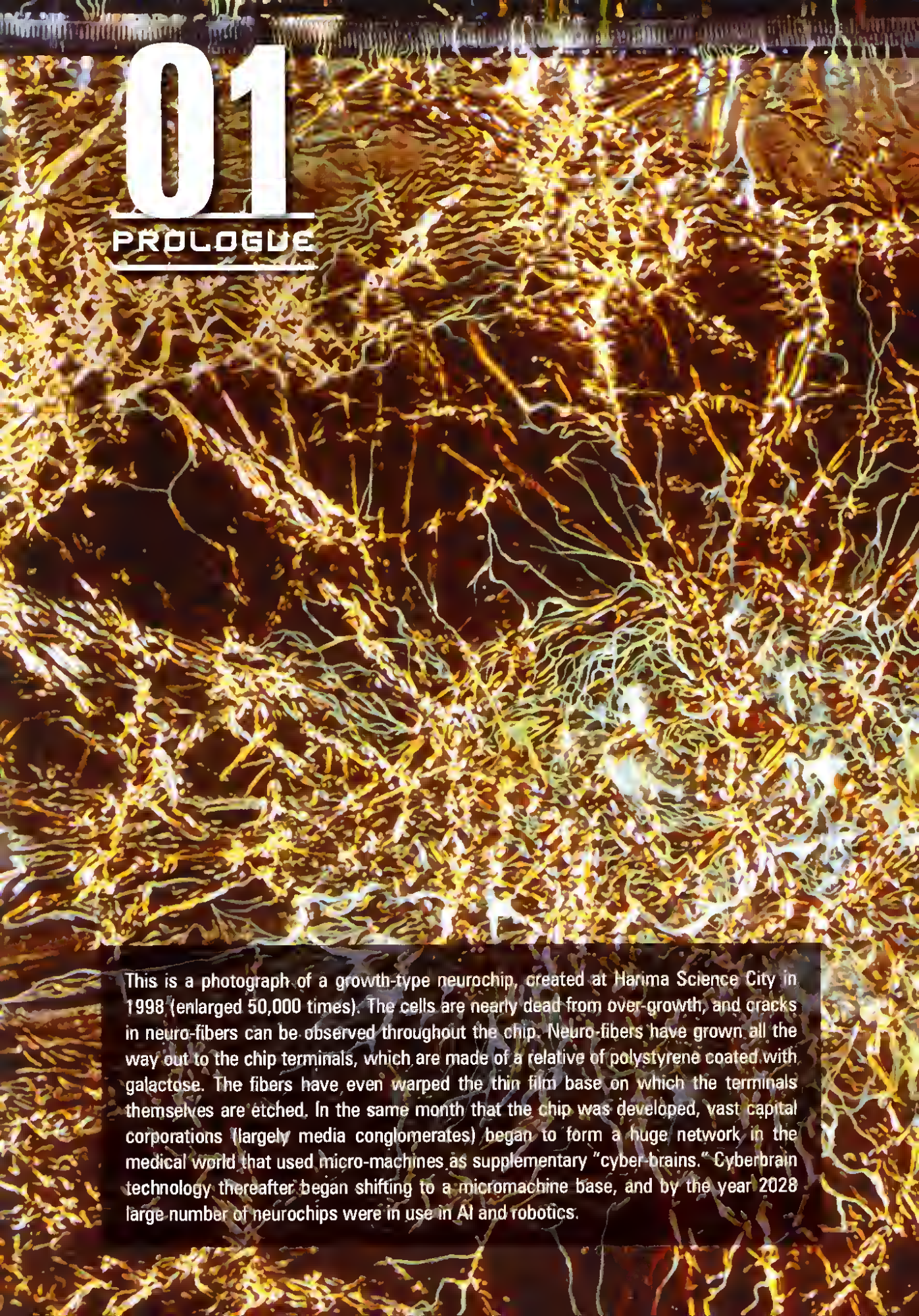
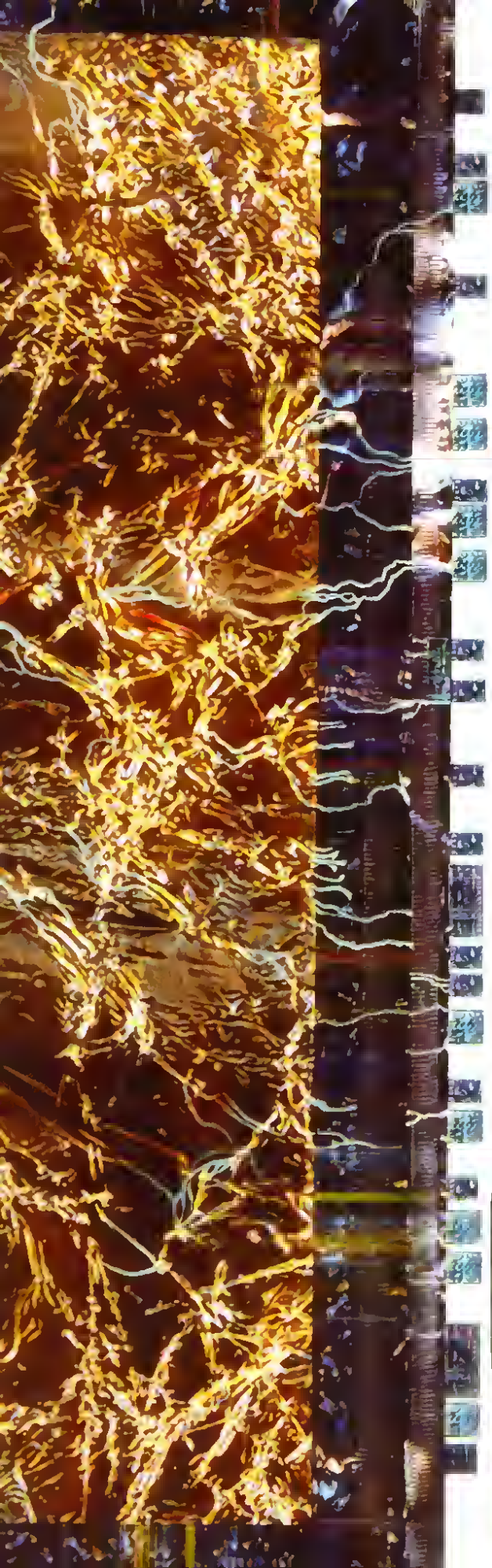
# 01

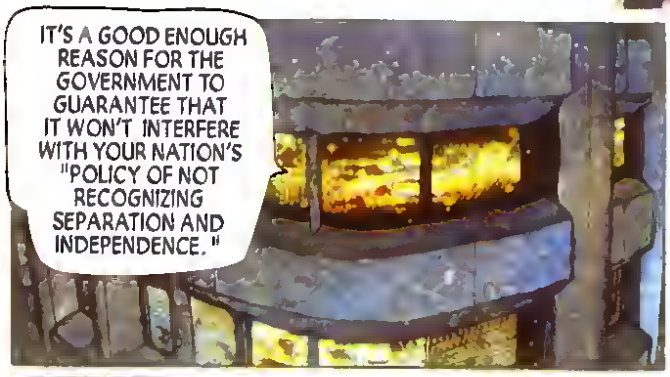
## PROLOGUE

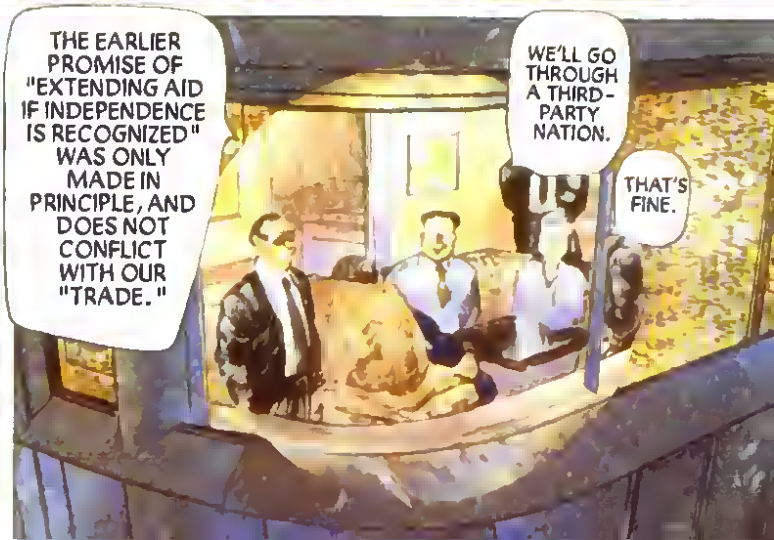


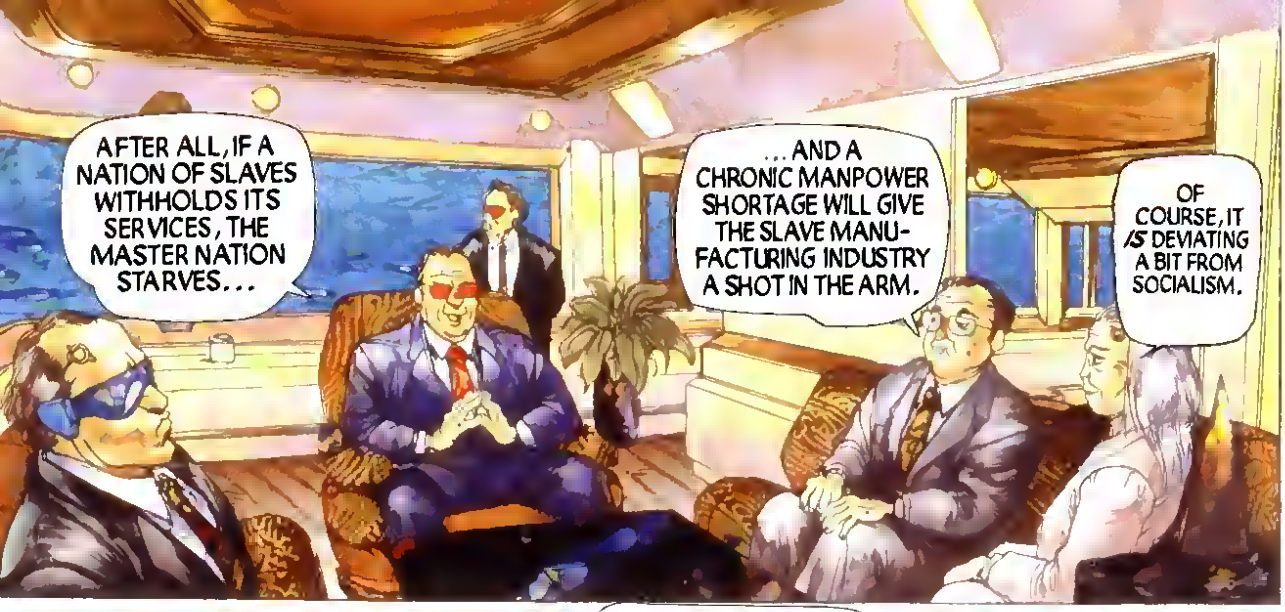
This is a photograph of a growth-type neurochip, created at Harima Science City in 1998 (enlarged 50,000 times). The cells are nearly dead from over-growth, and cracks in neuro-fibers can be observed throughout the chip. Neuro-fibers have grown all the way out to the chip terminals, which are made of a relative of polystyrene coated with galactose. The fibers have even warped the thin film base on which the terminals themselves are etched. In the same month that the chip was developed, vast capital corporations (largely media conglomerates) began to form a huge network in the medical world that used micro-machines as supplementary "cyber-brains." Cyberbrain technology thereafter began shifting to a micromachine base, and by the year 2028 large number of neurochips were in use in AI and robotics.

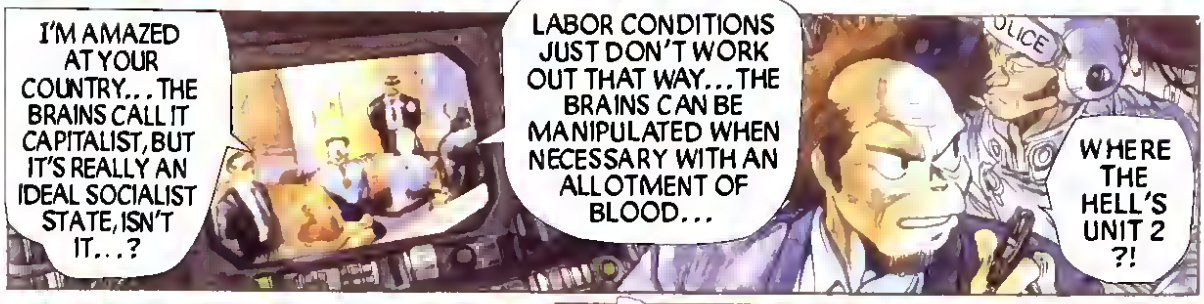


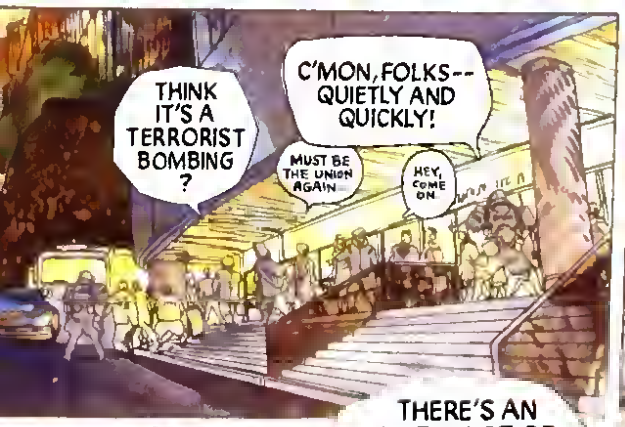
March 5, 2029. Newport City, a floating metropolis in Shinhama Perfecture.




AFTER ALL, IF A NATION OF SLAVES WITHHOLDS ITS SERVICES, THE MASTER NATION STARVES...
...AND A CHRONIC MANPOWER SHORTAGE WILL GIVE THE SLAVE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY A SHOT IN THE ARM.
OF COURSE, IT *IS* DEVIATING A BIT FROM SOCIALISM.


I'M AMAZED AT YOUR COUNTRY... THE BRAINS CALL IT CAPITALIST, BUT IT'S REALLY AN IDEAL SOCIALIST STATE, ISN'T IT...?
LABOR CONDITIONS JUST DON'T WORK OUT THAT WAY... THE BRAINS CAN BE MANIPULATED WHEN NECESSARY WITH AN ALLOTMENT OF BLOOD...
WHERE THE HELL'S UNIT 2 ?!


THINK IT'S A TERRORIST BOMBING ?
C'MON, FOLKS-- QUIETLY AND QUICKLY!
MUST BE THE UNION AGAIN...
HEY, COME ON...

CITIZEN EVACUATION COMPLETED, SIR!
THERE'S AN AWFUL LOT OF NOISE AROUND HERE. PRESSURE'S AWFUL HIGH TOO...
MAN, WE GOT SERIOUS *HERO* GOIN' ON!
POLICE
POLICE
POLICE
POLICE

TIK
MAJOR... SECURITY'S ALL READY TO GO...
KSSHH
BEEP

TIK
TIK
I HEAR YOU, I HEAR YOU...
KSSHK
LEAVE THE DAMN CODE ENCRYPTION UP TO THE *AI* AND THE WHOLE WORLD'LL HEAR US...
KSSHH

ALL RIGHT! CUT THE ELECTROMAG SHIELD! ALL UNITS POWER UP COMMS!
GO GET 'EM!
!
KGNAK
WHAT THE HELL'S THAT NOISE?
THD THD THD THD THD THD THD THD
WE'RE SURROUNDED BY PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES? YOU'RE KIDDING!
THD THD THD THD THD
BRITTTTTT
HNGK!
GTAK
WHAM WHAM
GTAK GTAK
GTAK
AAGH!

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YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T DO THAT, ARAMAKI! HE'S GETTING ON THE SAME AEROFLOT FLIGHT I AM!

HE APPLIED FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM WITH US, AND WE ACCEPTED. WE GOT A SWORN STATEMENT FROM HIM.

WHEN ?!

I DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER THAT.

BUT UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO PUT HIM UNDER OUR PROTECTION AND TAKE HIM BACK WITH US!

WELL, IF WE'RE TALKING LAW, THEN UNDER INTERNATIONAL ANTI-TERRORISM LAWS, WE DEMAND YOU HAND ITO OVER TO *US!*

PUT IT IN WRITING AND I'LL GET BACK TO YOU AFTER I TAKE IT UP WITH THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

AND BY THE WAY, THE ASYLUM FORMS ARE AT THE EMBASSY. I'LL FORWARD A COPY TO YOU LATER...

WELL, ITO? THIS WHAT YOU REALLY WANT?

YOU'LL BE ASSASSINATED, YOU KNOW.

HMPH

PEOPLE LIKE ITO ARE KEPT AS HOSTAGES UNTIL THEY'RE OF NO USE AND THEN EXCHANGED FOR SPIES ETC WHO'VE BEEN CAUGHT

COME, COME. MR. ITO KNOWS WE'RE A CIVILIZED, PEACE-LOVING NATION...

IS THAT A FACT?!

VHIP VHIP VHIP SPAK SPAK SPAK SPAK SPAK

WHAT TH-?!

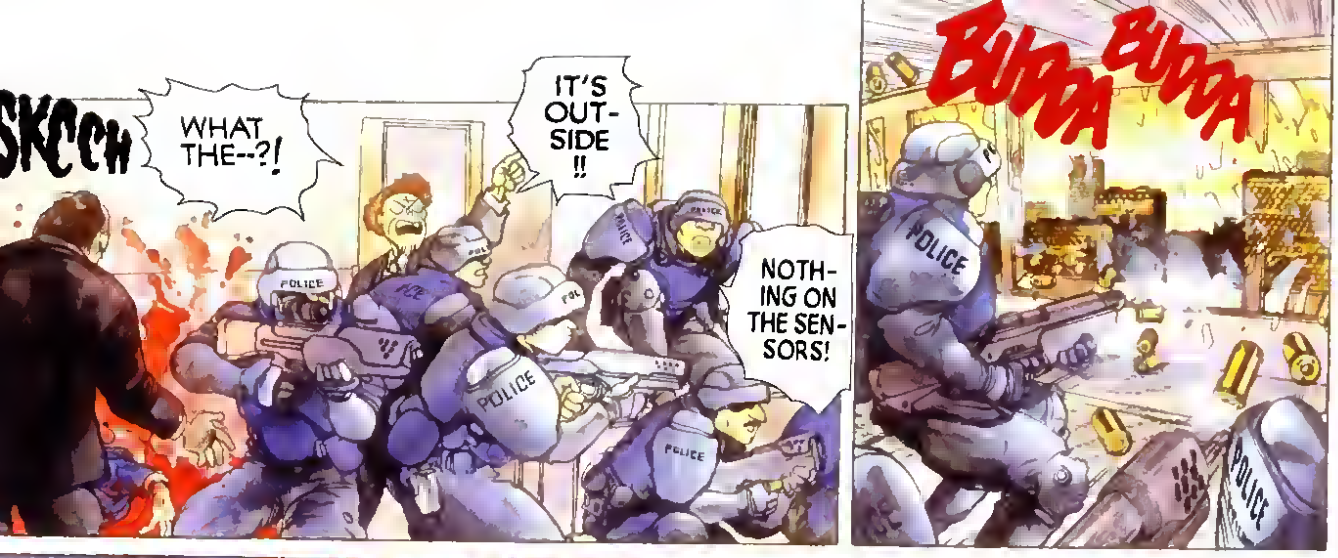
AGHH!

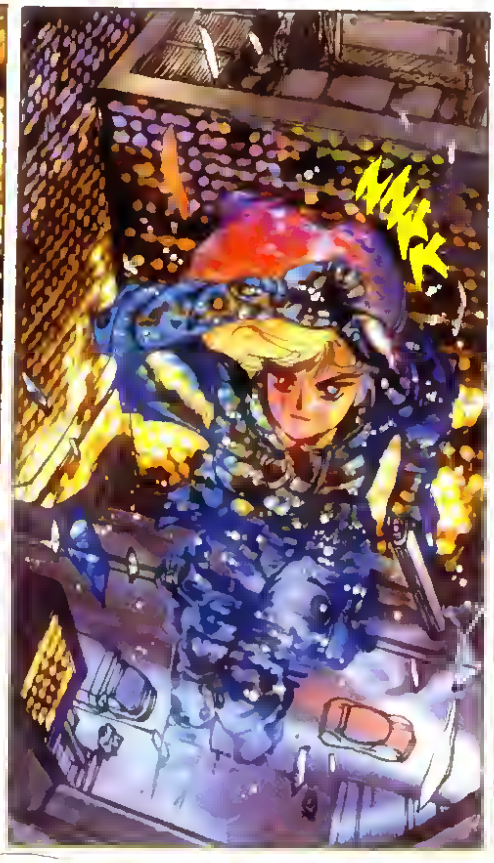
BOOMPH

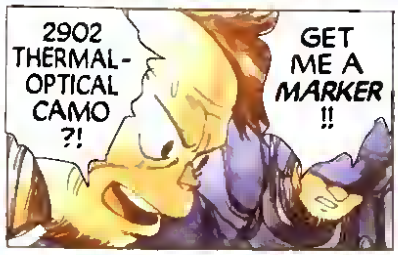
HOLY SHIT!

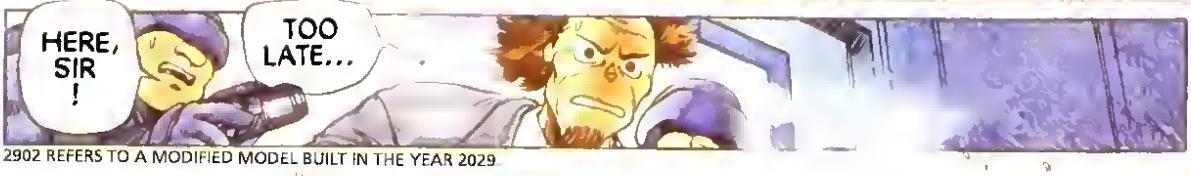
POLICE

DELAYED-FUSE, SOFT-HEAD EXPLOSIVE SHELLS








2902 REFERS TO A MODIFIED MODEL BUILT IN THE YEAR 2029.

The following day, the woman (a female model cyborg) was seated in the office of the Minister of Internal Affairs

. . . with an assassination order issued by the former prime minister.

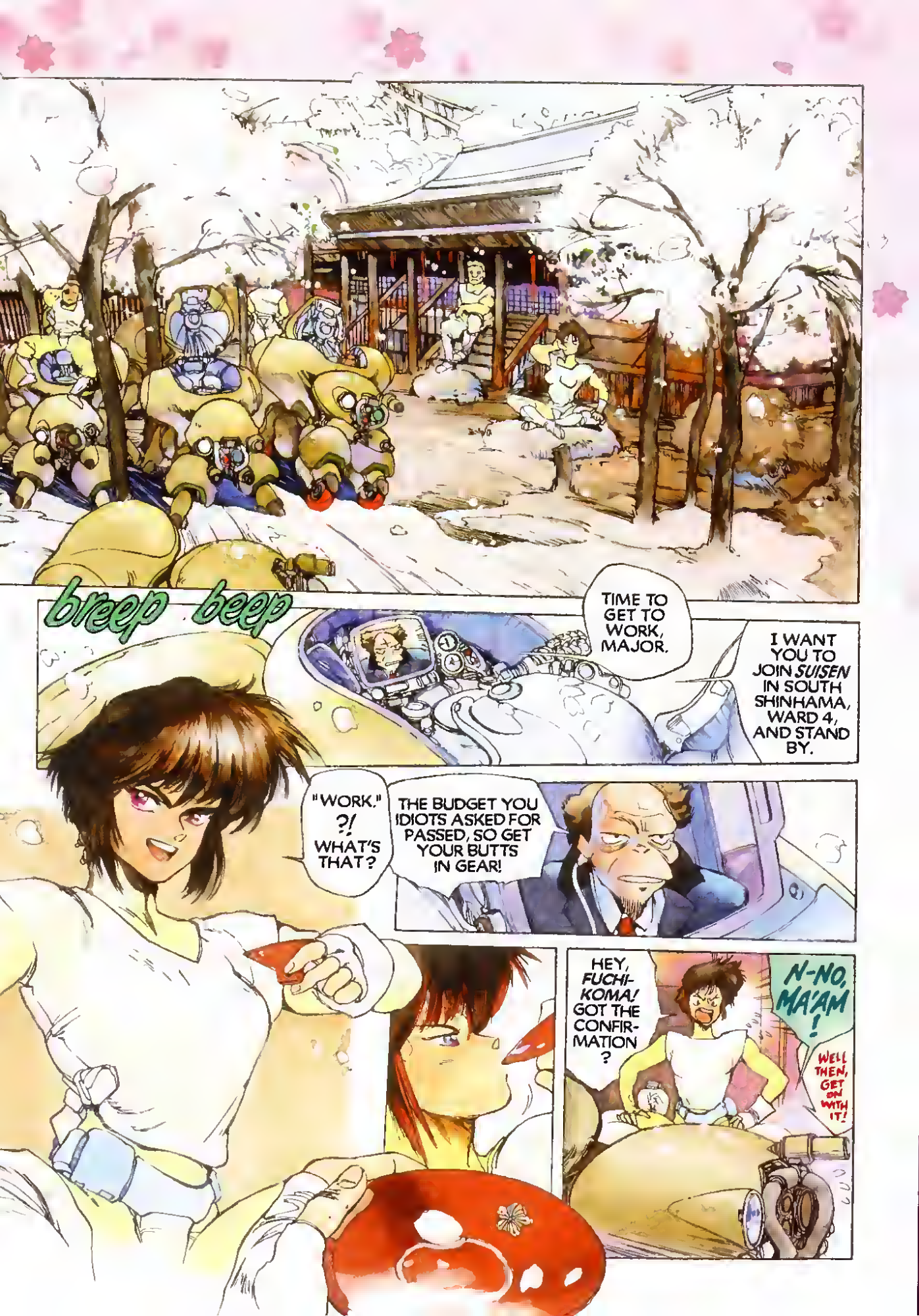
The only thing certain was that there had been a need to resolve a crisis and that the woman (or women) known as **Major Motoko Kusanagi** (obviously an alias) was extremely talented.

# 02

S U P E R

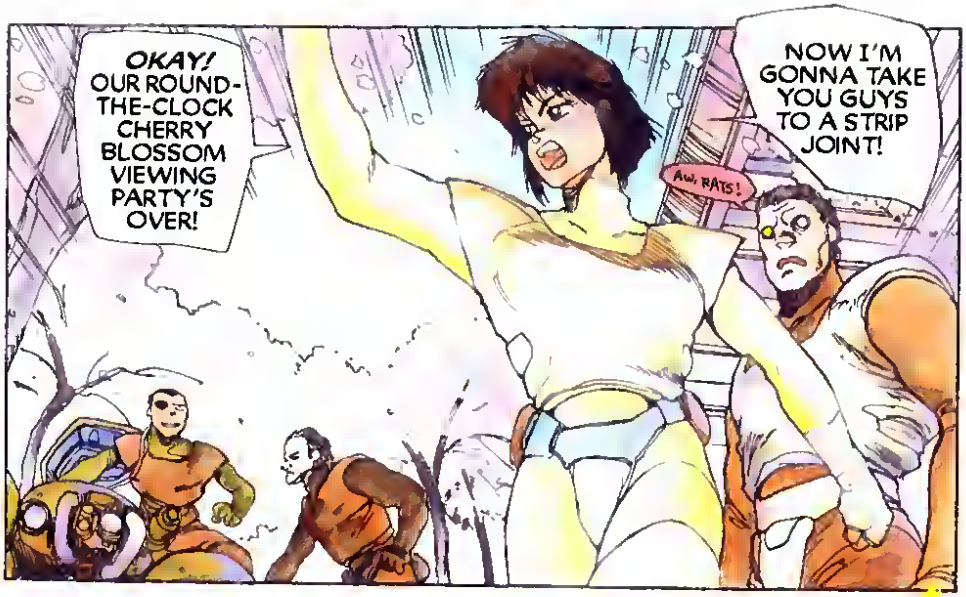
SPARTAN

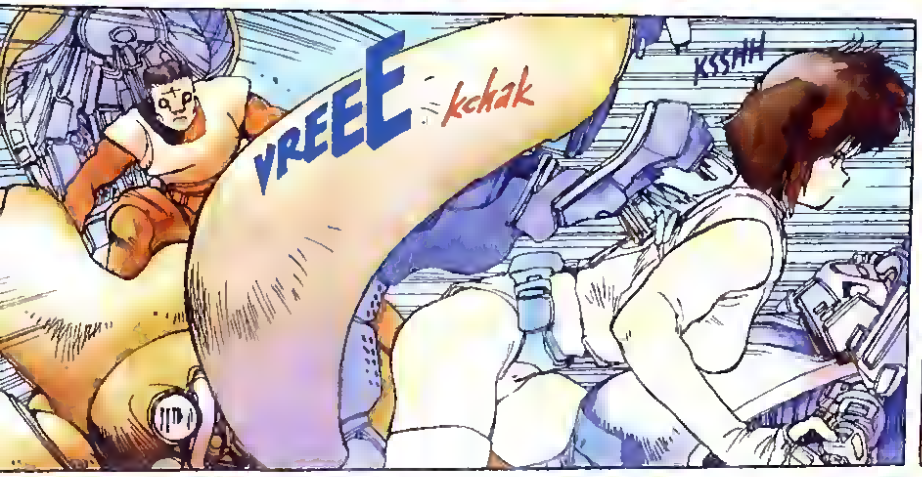
10. 4. 2029

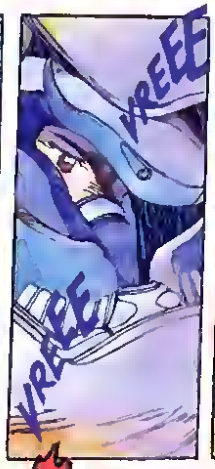

breep beep
TIME TO GET TO WORK, MAJOR.
I WANT YOU TO JOIN *SUISEN* IN SOUTH SHINHAMA, WARD 4, AND STAND BY.
"WORK." ?! WHAT'S THAT?
THE BUDGET YOU IDIOTS ASKED FOR PASSED, SO GET YOUR BUTTS IN GEAR!
HEY, *FUCHI-KOMA!* GOT THE CONFIR-MATION?
N-NO, MA'AM!
WELL THEN, GET ON WITH IT!

ZZZZK
JEEZ, DON'T MAKE THOSE HORRIBLE SOUNDS. GIVES ME THE CREEPS...
UNG!
CAN'T HELP IT, BATOU! MY NEW AUDIO IMPLANT'S GOT A BAD CONNECTION.
SO WHAT'S UP?
OLD APE-FACE IS QUITE THE LITTLE MANIPULATOR.
THERE WERE THREE IN FAVOR OF THE DEAL, TWO AGAINST, AND ONE ABSTENTION.
WELL, TO FORMALLY APPLY TO THE MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS FOR A SPECIAL FORCES UNIT, WE DID NEED THE, ah, "CO-OPERATION" OF PUBLIC SECURITY.
YEAH, BUT HE'D LIKE TO SEE US PERMANENTLY ATTACHED TO HIM RATHER THAN INDEPENDENT...
RIGHT, AND THAT'S WHY HE'S SETTING US UP SO WE CAN'T SAY NO...

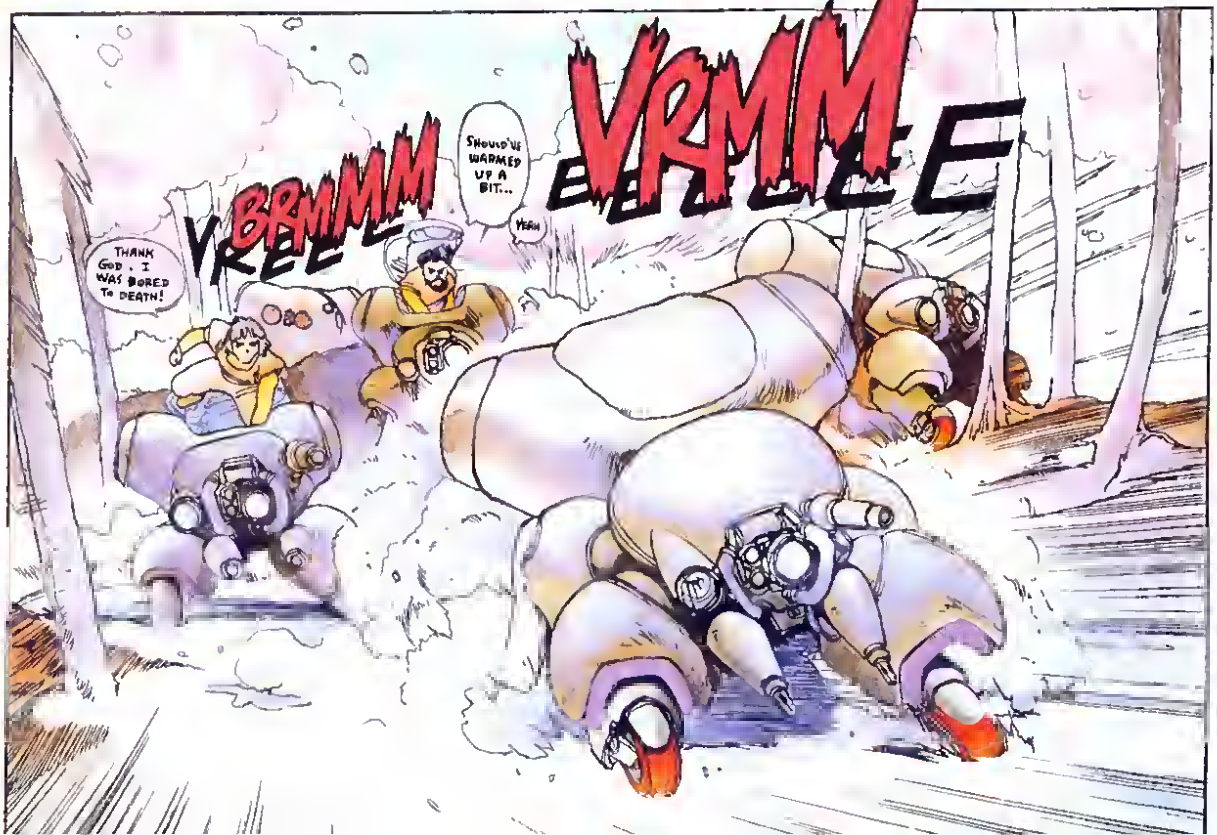
HAVE-REPORT-THAT-BUDGET-HAS-PASSED-IN-327TH-SESSION-OF-NATIONAL-COUNCIL. NOW-RECONFIRMING.

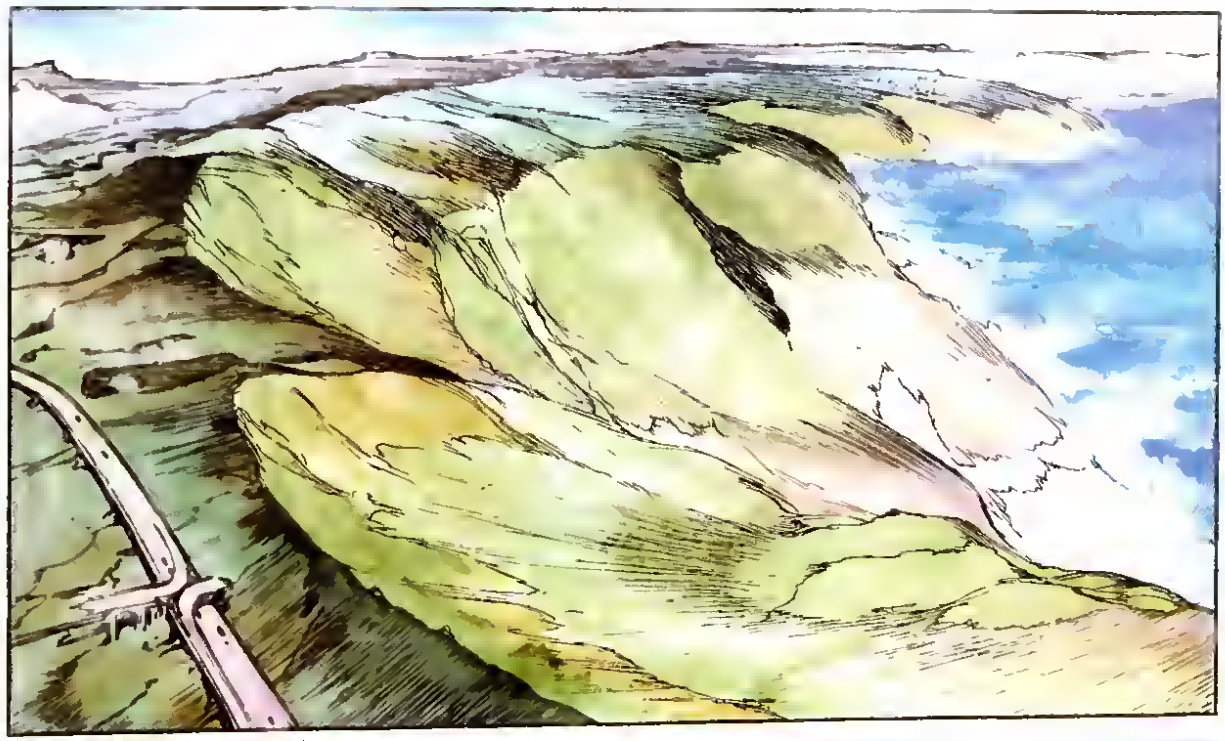

OKAY! OUR ROUND-THE-CLOCK CHERRY BLOSSOM VIEWING PARTY'S OVER!
NOW I'M GONNA TAKE YOU GUYS TO A STRIP JOINT!
AW, RATS!

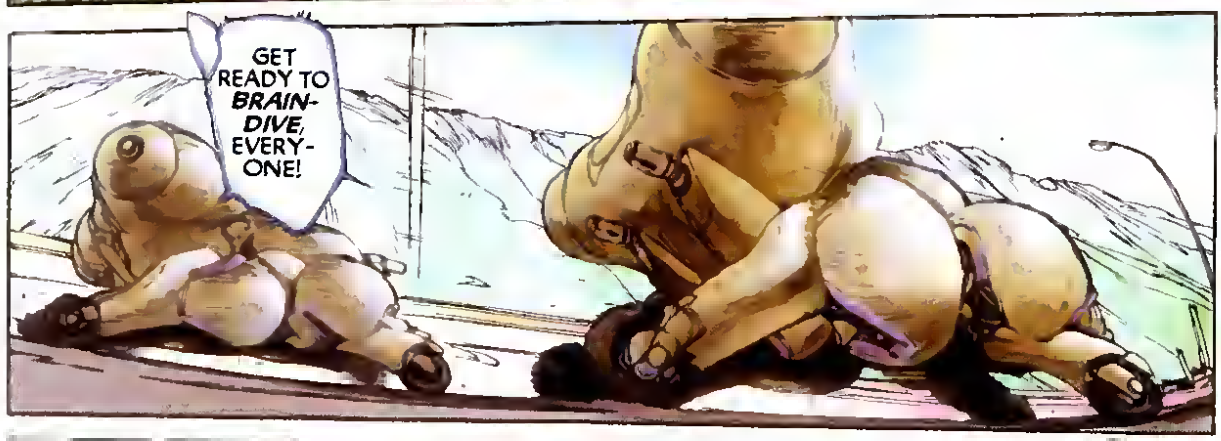

VREEE
kchak
KSSHH

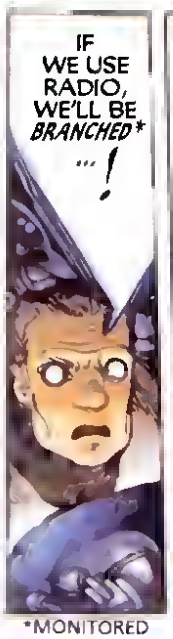

VREEE
VREEE

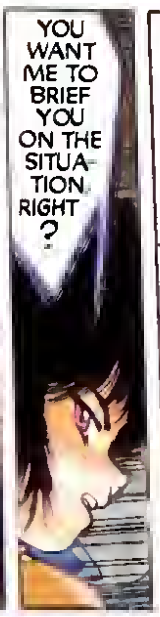
SKREEE

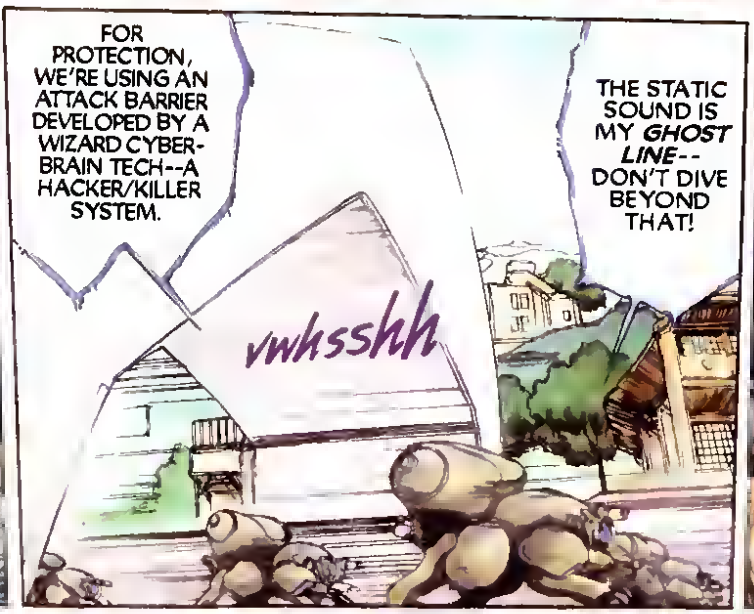

VRMM
VRBMMM
VREEE
SHOULD'VE WARMED UP A BIT...
YEAH
THANK GOD. I WAS BORED TO DEATH!




GET READY TO *BRAIN-DIVE*, EVERY-ONE!

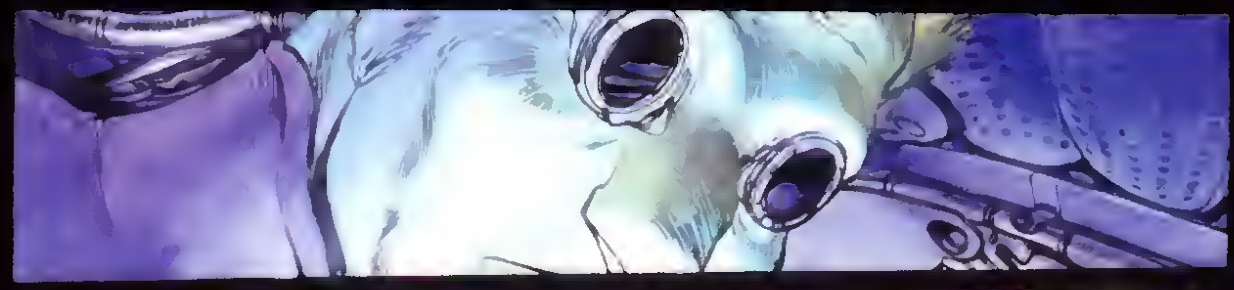

IF WE USE RADIO, WE'LL BE *BRANCHED** ...!


YOU WANT ME TO BRIEF YOU ON THE SITUA-TION RIGHT ?

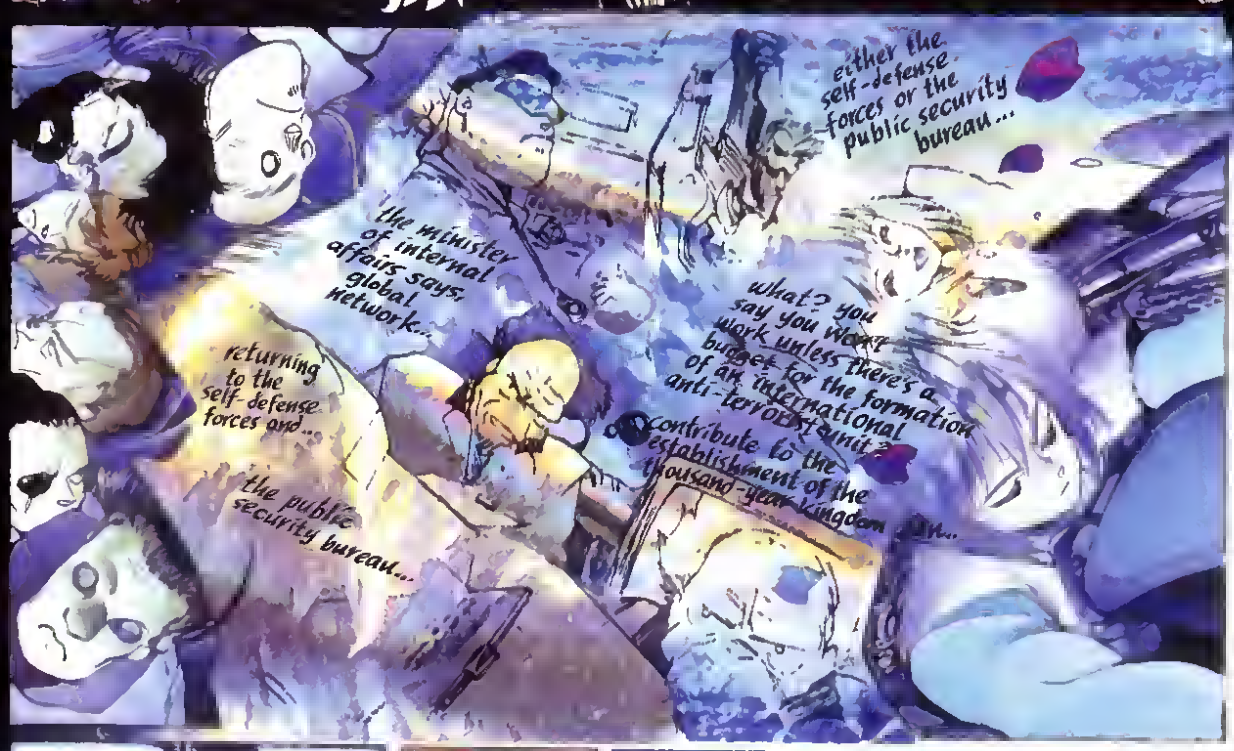

FOR PROTECTION, WE'RE USING AN ATTACK BARRIER DEVELOPED BY A WIZARD CYBER-BRAIN TECH--A HACKER/KILLER SYSTEM.
vwhsshh
THE STATIC SOUND IS MY *GHOST LINE*-- DON'T DIVE BEYOND THAT!

BLUB BLUB BLUB

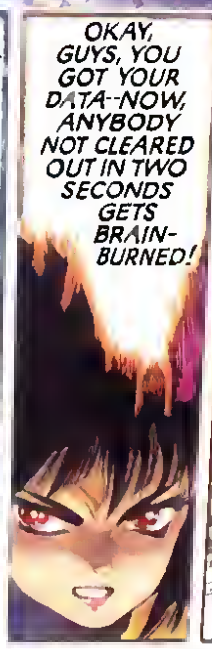
*MONITORED

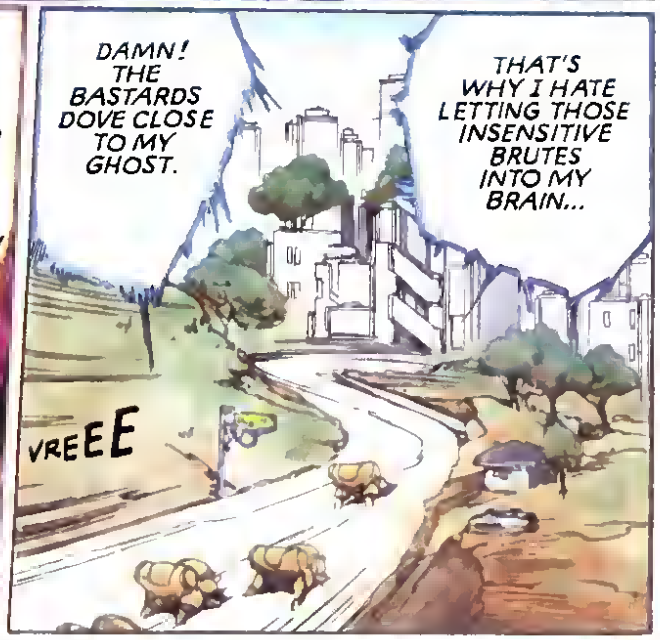


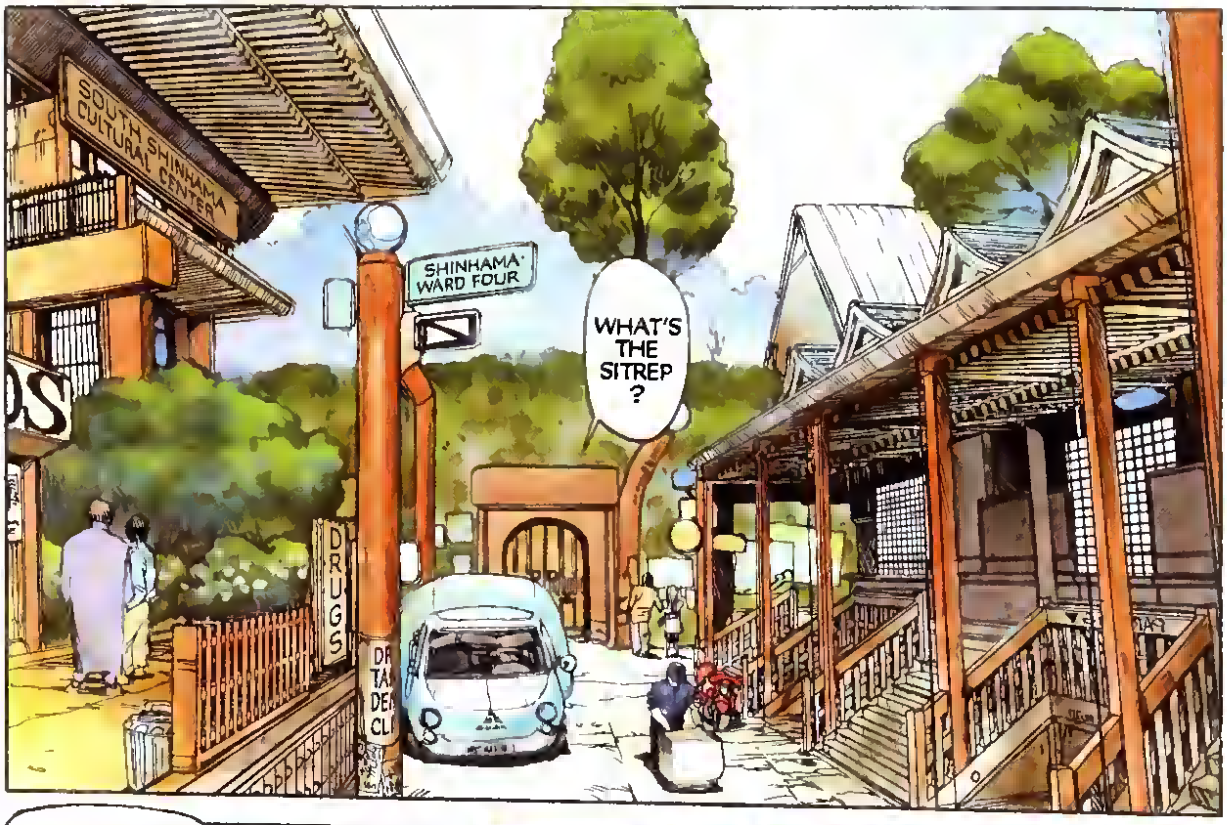
SIZZK

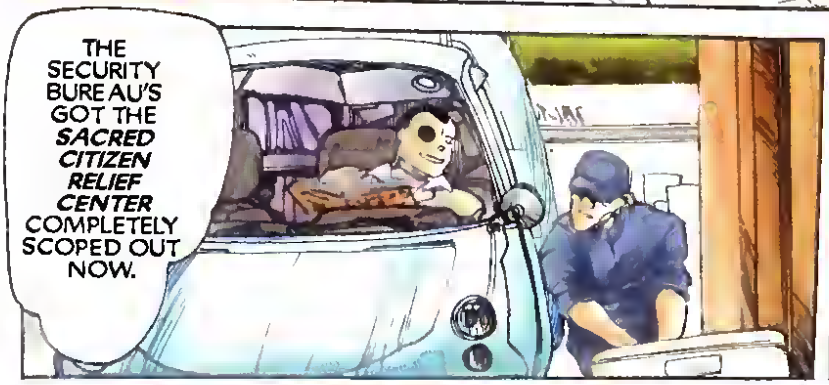

either the self-defense forces or the public security bureau...
the minister of internal affairs says: global network...
returning to the self-defense forces and...
the public security bureau...
what? you say you won't work unless there's a budget for the formation of an international anti-terrorist unit? contribute to the establishment of the thousand-year kingdom, eh...

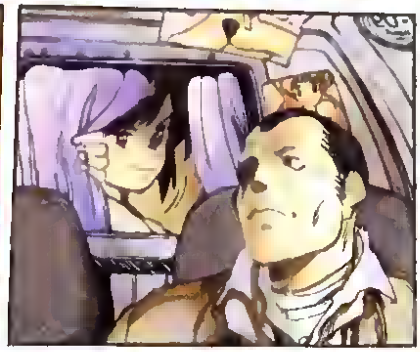
DAMN, THERE'S A LOT OF NOISE IN YOUR BRAIN, MAJOR...
HEY, I'M ON MY PERIOD!
MAJOR, YOUR PROSTHETIC HAND HURTS A BIT, DOESN'T IT...
WHAT'S THIS BITTER TASTE... YOU TAKING A TRANQUILIZER?

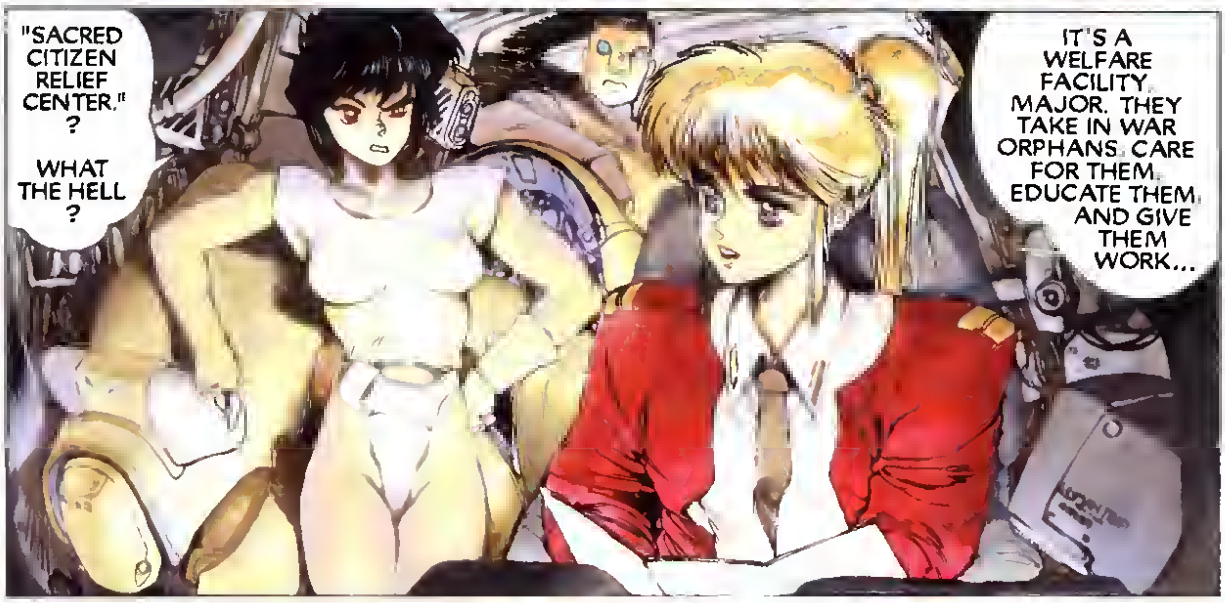

OKAY, GUYS, YOU GOT YOUR DATA--NOW, ANYBODY NOT CLEARED OUT IN TWO SECONDS GETS BRAIN-BURNED!

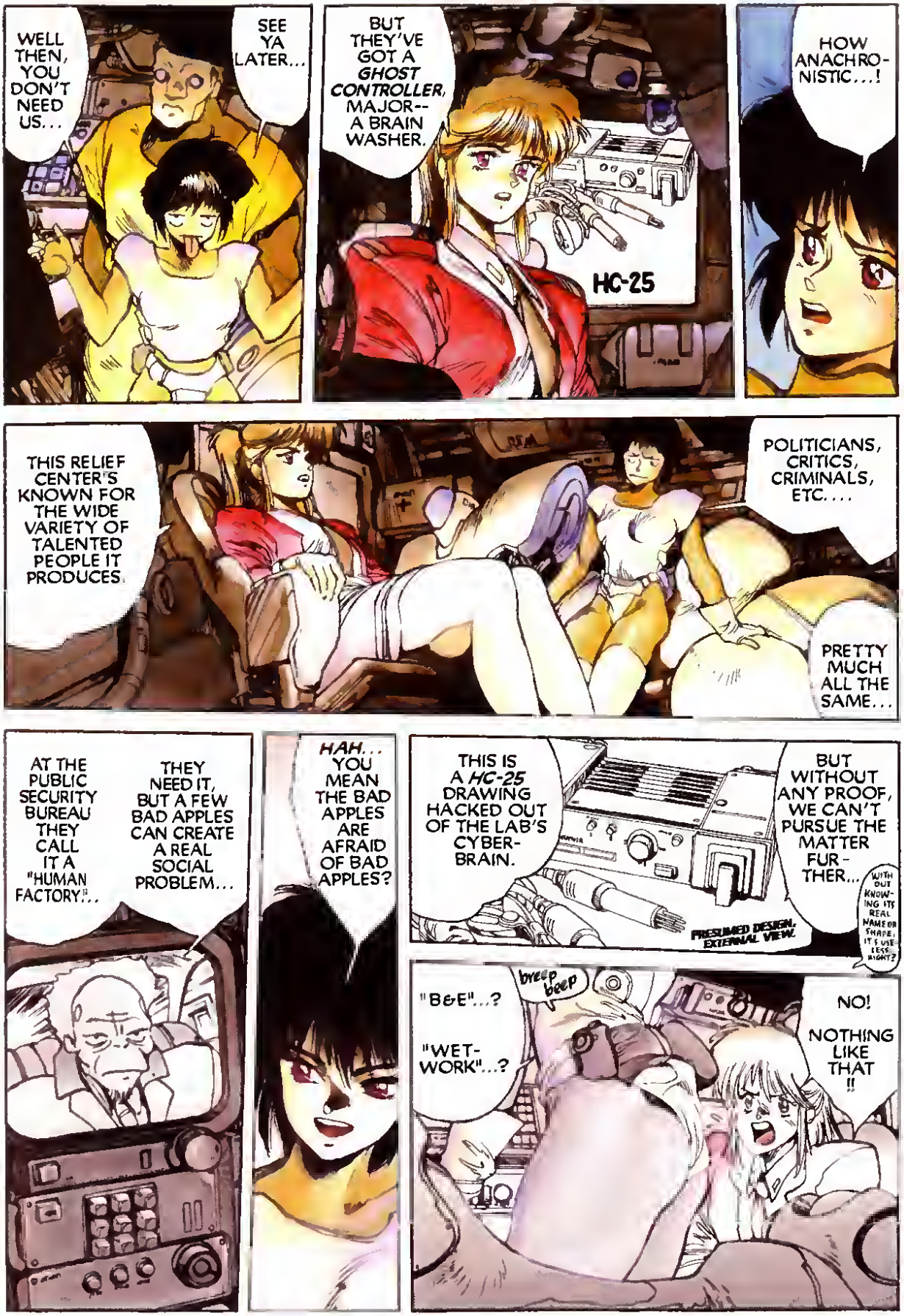

DAMN! THE BASTARDS DOVE CLOSE TO MY GHOST.
THAT'S WHY I HATE LETTING THOSE INSENSITIVE BRUTES INTO MY BRAIN...
VREEE


SOUTH SHINHAMA CULTURAL CENTER
SHINHAMA WARD FOUR
DRUGS
WHAT'S THE SITREP ?


THE SECURITY BUREAU'S GOT THE *SACRED CITIZEN RELIEF CENTER* COMPLETELY SCOPED OUT NOW.

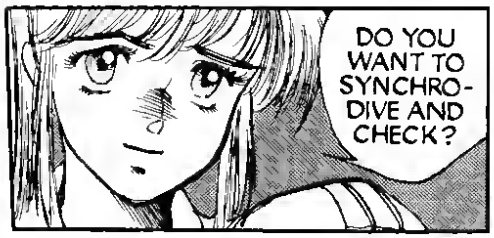


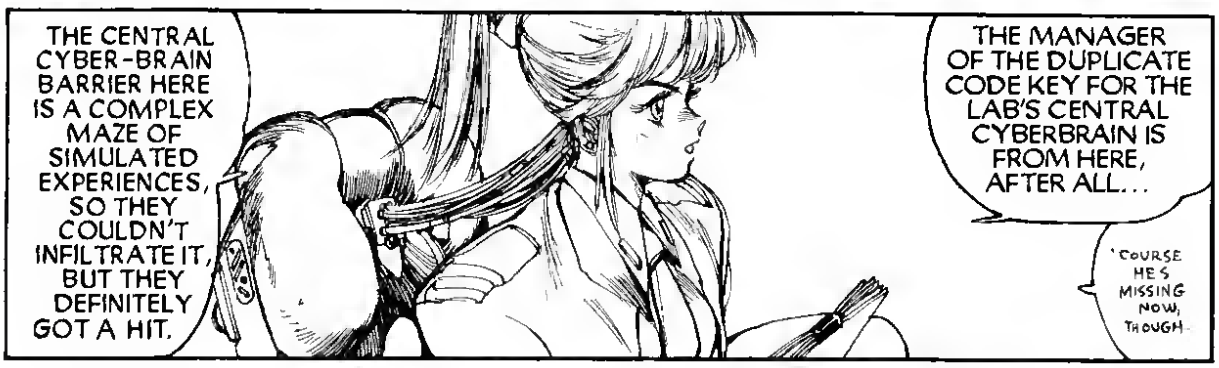

"SACRED CITIZEN RELIEF CENTER." ?
WHAT THE HELL ?
IT'S A WELFARE FACILITY, MAJOR. THEY TAKE IN WAR ORPHANS, CARE FOR THEM, EDUCATE THEM, AND GIVE THEM WORK...


WELL THEN, YOU DON'T NEED US...
SEE YA LATER...
BUT THEY'VE GOT A GHOST CONTROLLER, MAJOR-- A BRAIN WASHER.
HC-25
HOW ANACHRO-NISTIC...!
THIS RELIEF CENTER'S KNOWN FOR THE WIDE VARIETY OF TALENTED PEOPLE IT PRODUCES.
POLITICIANS, CRITICS, CRIMINALS, ETC....
PRETTY MUCH ALL THE SAME...
AT THE PUBLIC SECURITY BUREAU THEY CALL IT A "HUMAN FACTORY"...
THEY NEED IT, BUT A FEW BAD APPLES CAN CREATE A REAL SOCIAL PROBLEM...
HAH... YOU MEAN THE BAD APPLES ARE AFRAID OF BAD APPLES?
THIS IS A HC-25 DRAWING HACKED OUT OF THE LAB'S CYBER-BRAIN.
PRESUMED DESIGN. EXTERNAL VIEW.
BUT WITHOUT ANY PROOF, WE CAN'T PURSUE THE MATTER FUR-THER...
WITH OUT KNOW-ING ITS REAL NAME OR SHAPE, IT'S USE-LESS, RIGHT?
"B&E"...?
"WET-WORK"...?
bleep beep
NO! NOTHING LIKE THAT !!

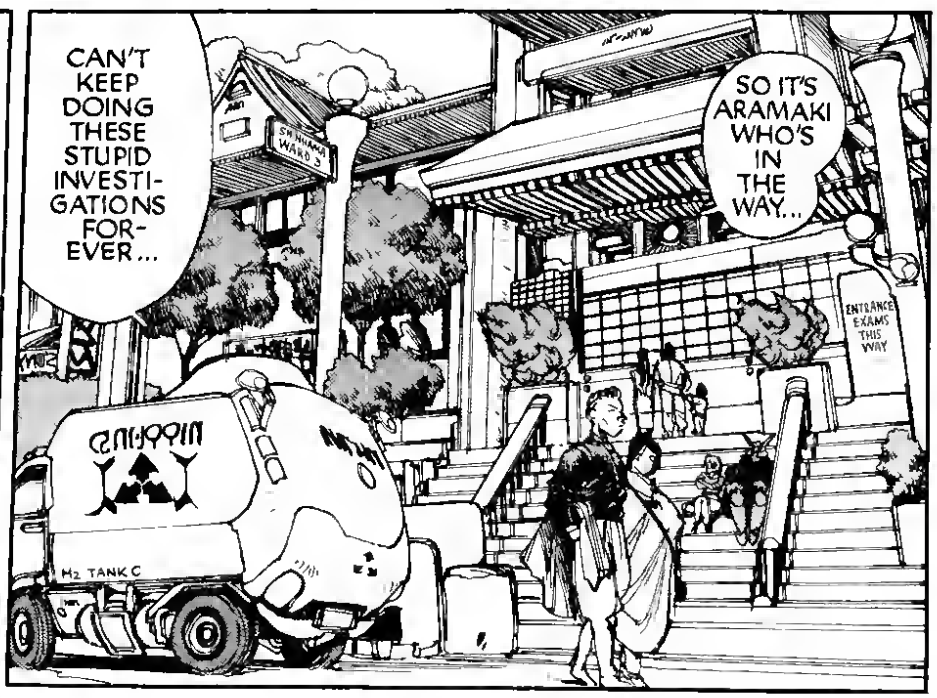
THE GOAL HERE IS TO BE ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF THE PROBLEM AND TO "ARREST" THEM IF NEED BE...
TO "OFFICIALLY" DO THAT WITHOUT ANY EVIDENCE OR AN ARREST WARRANT?
CHIK
b-beeep

SO WHY DO THEY HAVE IT HERE...?
THEY'VE TRIED TO GET A HACKER IN AND FAILED, EH?
TOO-MUCH-FOR-ME...


DO YOU WANT TO SYNCHRO-DIVE AND CHECK?


THE CENTRAL CYBER-BRAIN BARRIER HERE IS A COMPLEX MAZE OF SIMULATED EXPERIENCES, SO THEY COULDN'T INFILTRATE IT, BUT THEY DEFINITELY GOT A HIT.
THE MANAGER OF THE DUPLICATE CODE KEY FOR THE LAB'S CENTRAL CYBERBRAIN IS FROM HERE, AFTER ALL...
'COURSE HE'S MISSING NOW, THOUGH.

*DAMN* THAT ARAMAKI--HE'S TRYING TO FORCE US INTO AN ATTACK BASED ON FALSE INTEL, AND THEN IF THERE'S A LAW-SUIT HE'LL HANG ME OUT TO DRY...


CAN'T KEEP DOING THESE STUPID INVESTI-GATIONS FOR-EVER...
SO IT'S ARAMAKI WHO'S IN THE WAY...
SHINJUKU WARD'S
ENTRANCE EXAMS THIS WAY
M2 TANK C

0
9
3
6
Oh, what a wonderful center ...
DISCIPLINE
Oh, our teacher is so kind...
Oh, our meals are so fine... our beds so fluffy... our work so fun...
SPLUK
Porridge every day last year, this year and next year too. Oh, I'm so lucky...
65
Thank you so much, school-master...
Yes, thank you indeed, kind sir...
83
82

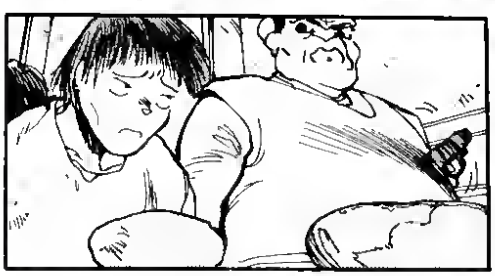
EAT NOW !!

CHOMP
WOLF
gulp
SLURP
mmph

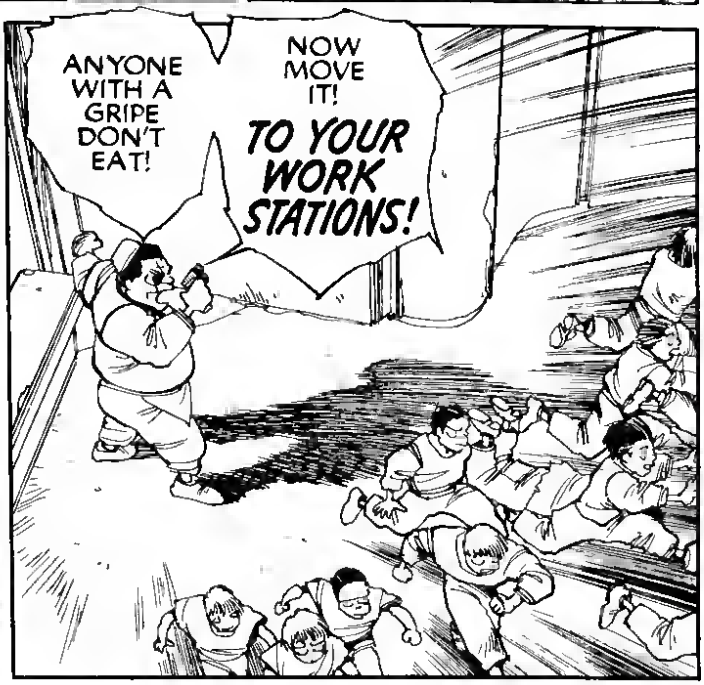
SLURP
SLURP
Gobble
MNCH
SLPP

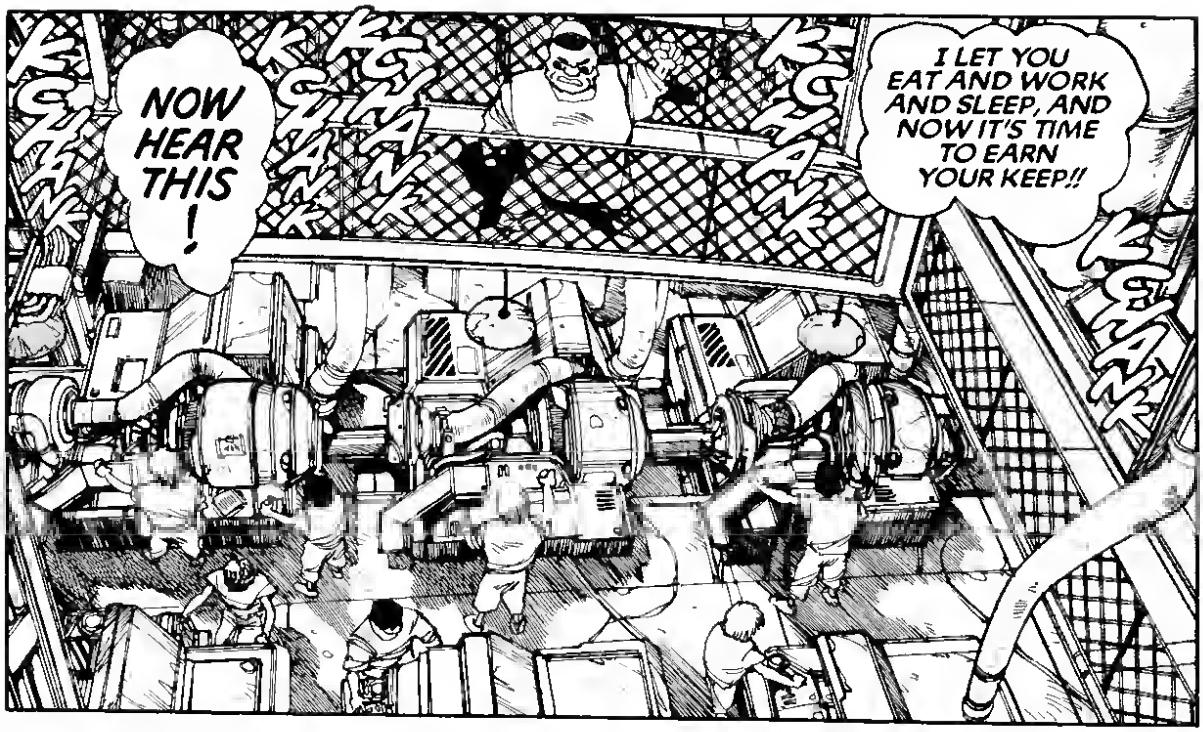
SLURP
CHOMP
GLMPH

STOP NOW !

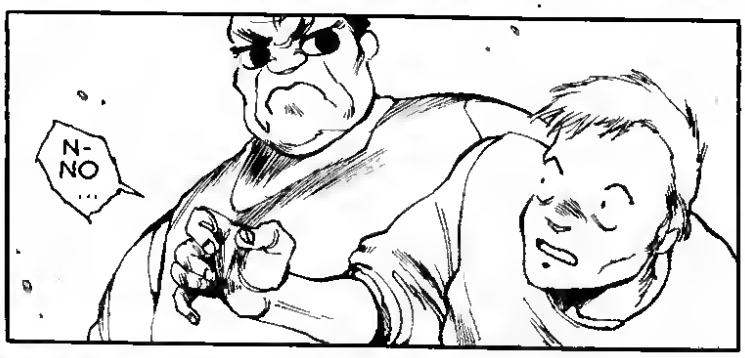


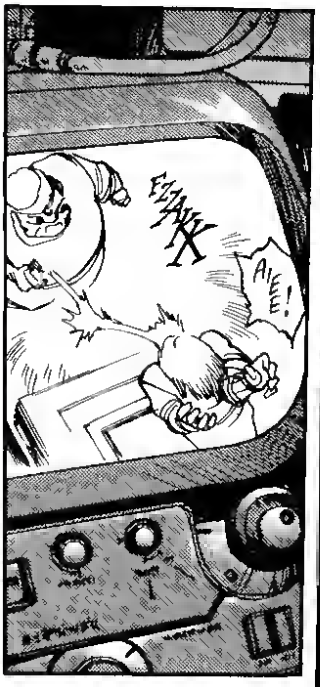
SLAM

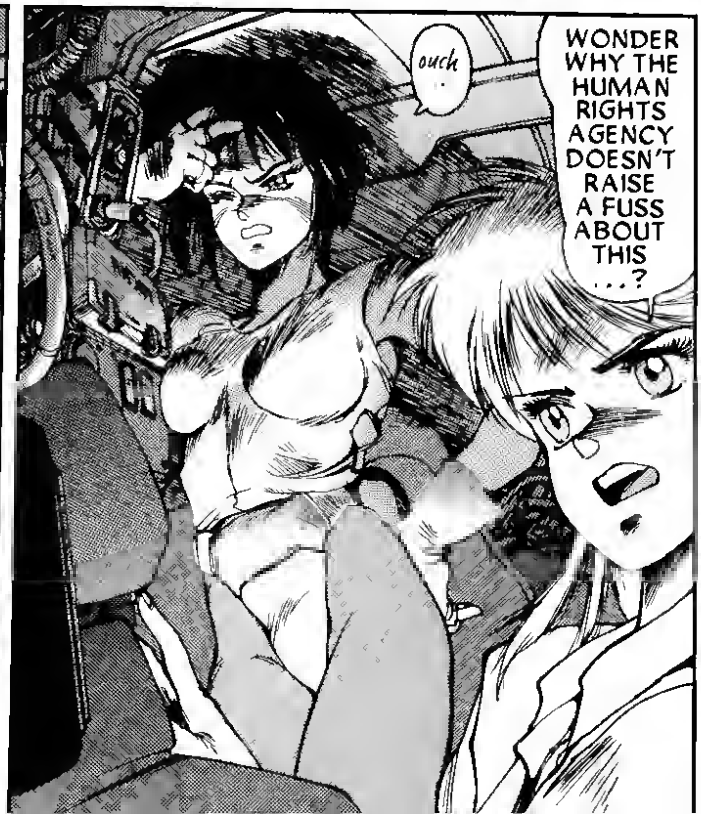

ANYONE WITH A GRIPE DON'T EAT!
NOW MOVE IT!
TO YOUR WORK STATIONS!


NOW HEAR THIS!
I LET YOU EAT AND WORK AND SLEEP, AND NOW IT'S TIME TO EARN YOUR KEEP!!
KGHANK

AHGG... MY HAND!

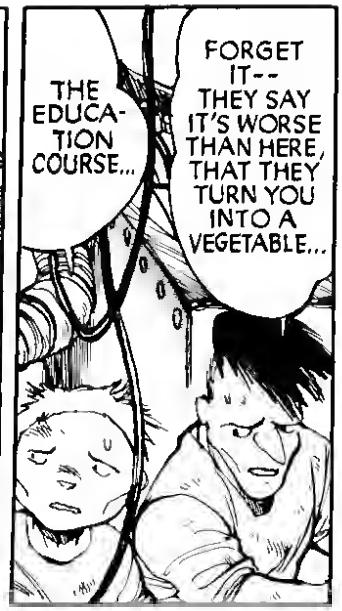

N-NO...

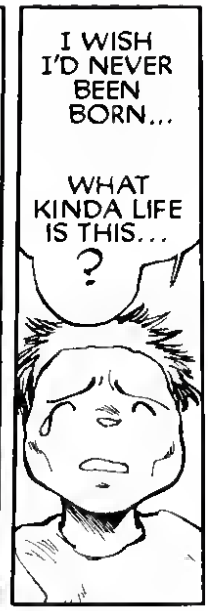

AIEE!

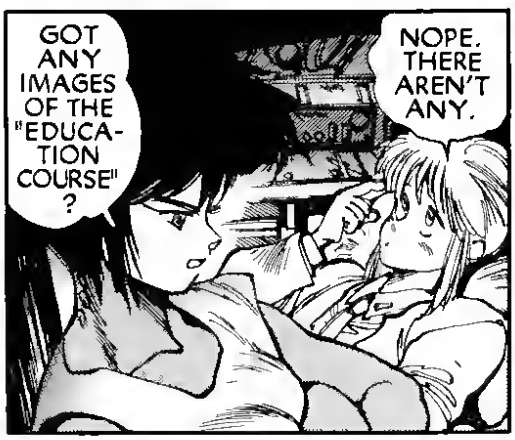

ouch
WONDER WHY THE HUMAN RIGHTS AGENCY DOESN'T RAISE A FUSS ABOUT THIS...?

BECAUSE THE WATER FILTERS THE KIDS ARE MAKING ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN HUMAN RIGHTS, THAT'S WHY. HEY, PEOPLE ARE CRUEL...

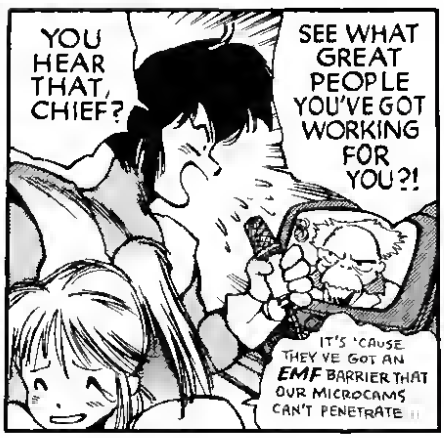
IF YOU DON'T WANT TO WORK, TAKE THE EDUCATION COURSE. IF YOU DON'T WANT TO DO EITHER, I WON'T APPLY FOR YOUR CITIZENSHIP PAPERS FOR YOU!
YOU WANNA DIE HOMELESS ?!
KANG
KANG
KANG


THE EDUCATION COURSE...
FORGET IT-- THEY SAY IT'S WORSE THAN HERE, THAT THEY TURN YOU INTO A VEGETABLE...

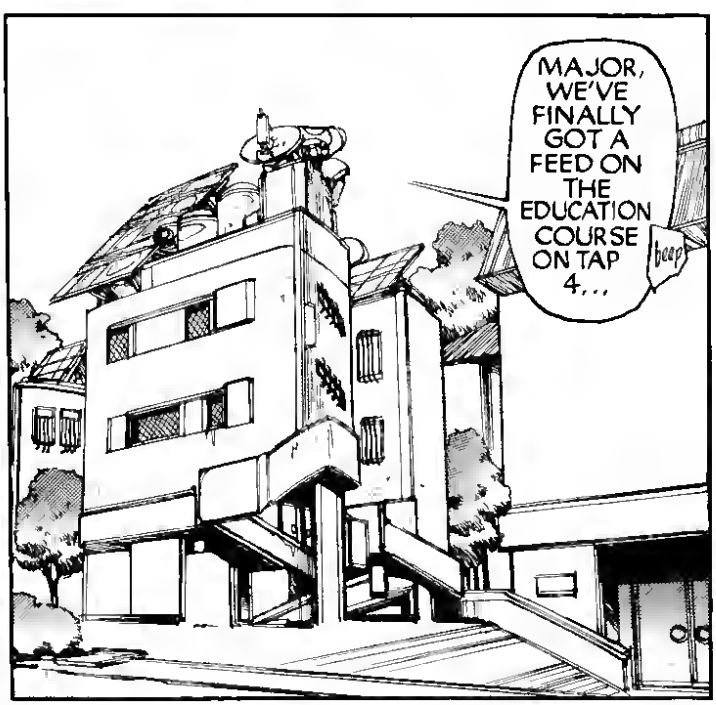

I WISH I'D NEVER BEEN BORN...
WHAT KINDA LIFE IS THIS... ?


GOT ANY IMAGES OF THE "EDUCATION COURSE" ?
NOPE. THERE AREN'T ANY.

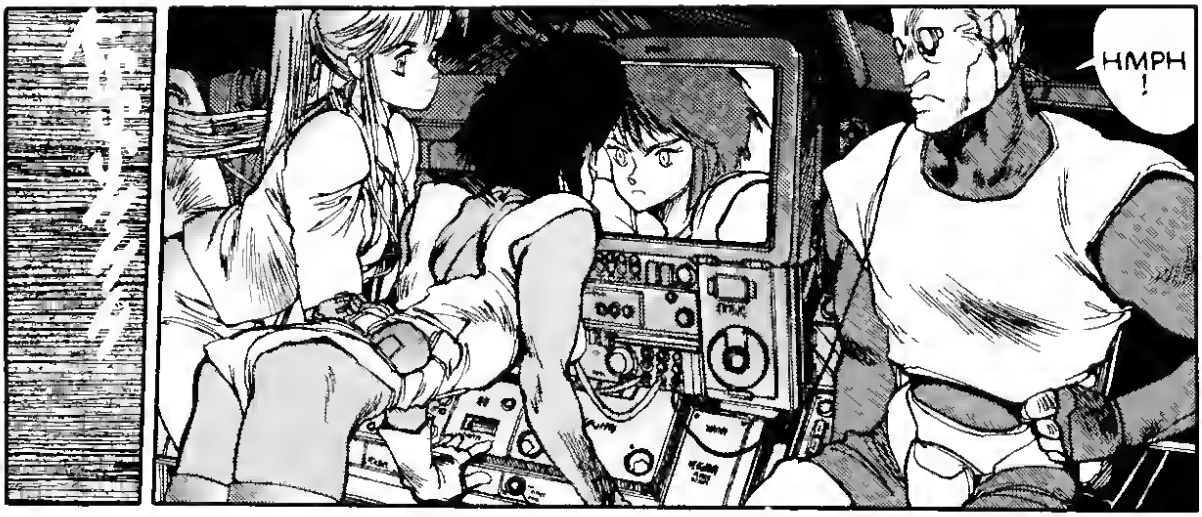
WHAT ?


YOU HEAR THAT, CHIEF?
SEE WHAT GREAT PEOPLE YOU'VE GOT WORKING FOR YOU?!
IT'S 'CAUSE THEY'VE GOT AN EMF BARRIER THAT OUR MICROCAMS CAN'T PENETRATE

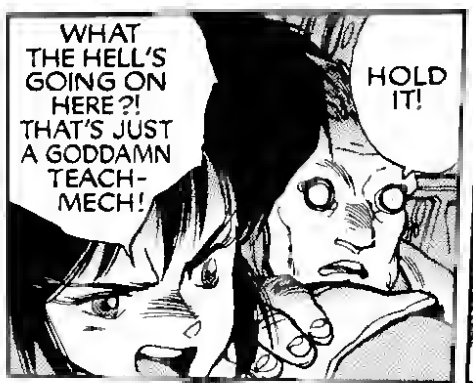
LISTEN, MAJOR...
WHY DON'T YOU CUT THE PISSING AND MOANING, AND JUST COME OVER TO SECURITY


MAJOR, WE'VE FINALLY GOT A FEED ON THE EDUCATION COURSE ON TAP 4...
beep

breep breep
SZZK
WHA-?!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, NO. 28 ?!
WHAT ?! IT'S WEIRD! WEIRD!!
THE UNIVERSE IS FALLING ON ME...!
HEY! WE'VE GOT AN OVER-FLOW HERE!
CALM DOWN, KID! CALM DOWN!
NO!! I CAN'T STAND IT ANY-MORE!
STOP !


HMPH!

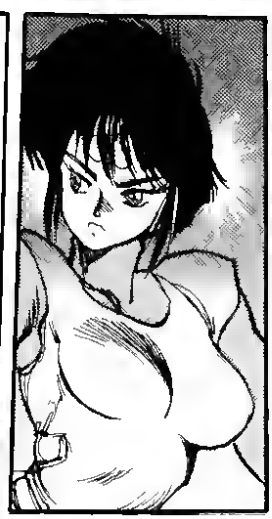
HEY!
WHOO!
HKK!

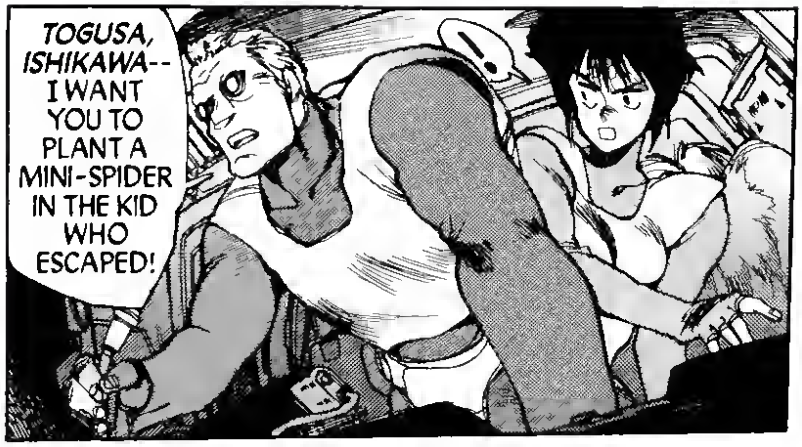

WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON HERE?! THAT'S JUST A GODDAMN TEACH-MECH!
HOLD IT!

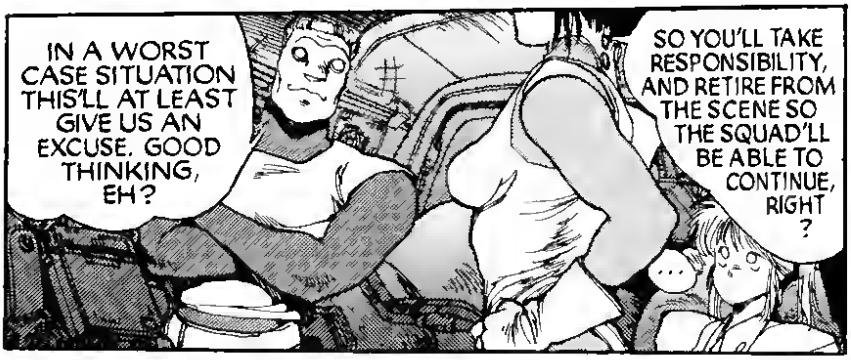
WEEOO
Uh, oh...

THAT'S AN ESCAPE SIREN...
SO?

SOME-THING'S NOT RIGHT...
DIDN'T YOU SENSE SOME-THING JUST BEFORE THE SCREEN WENT BLANK... SOME-THING THAT SAID "IF I GET CAUGHT IT'S ALL OVER, BUT THEN I'LL HAVE PEACE.."

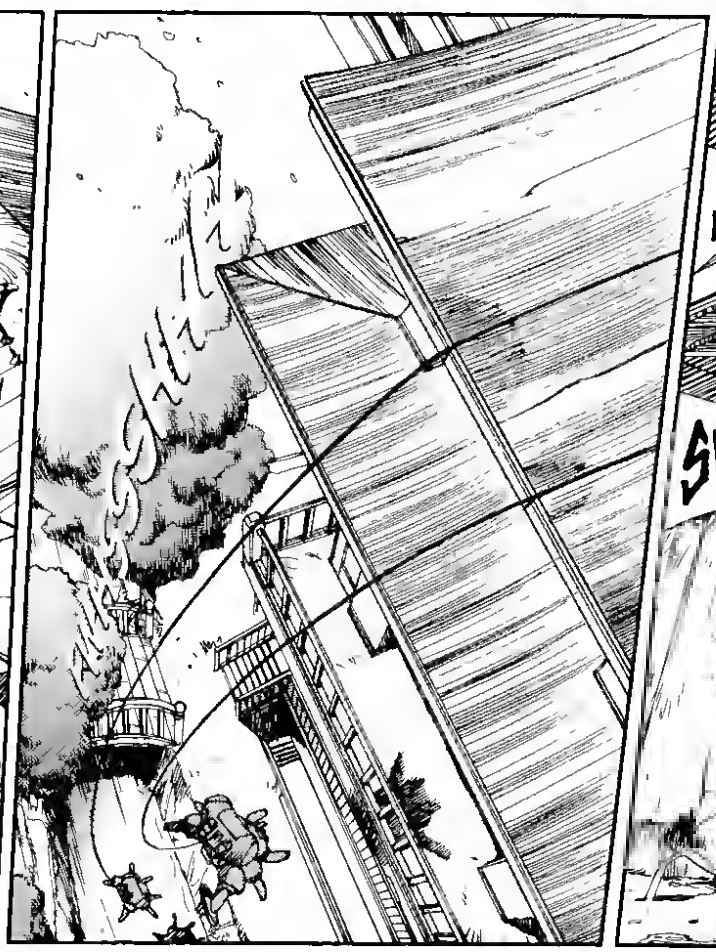



TOGUSA, ISHIKAWA-- I WANT YOU TO PLANT A MINI-SPIDER IN THE KID WHO ESCAPED!

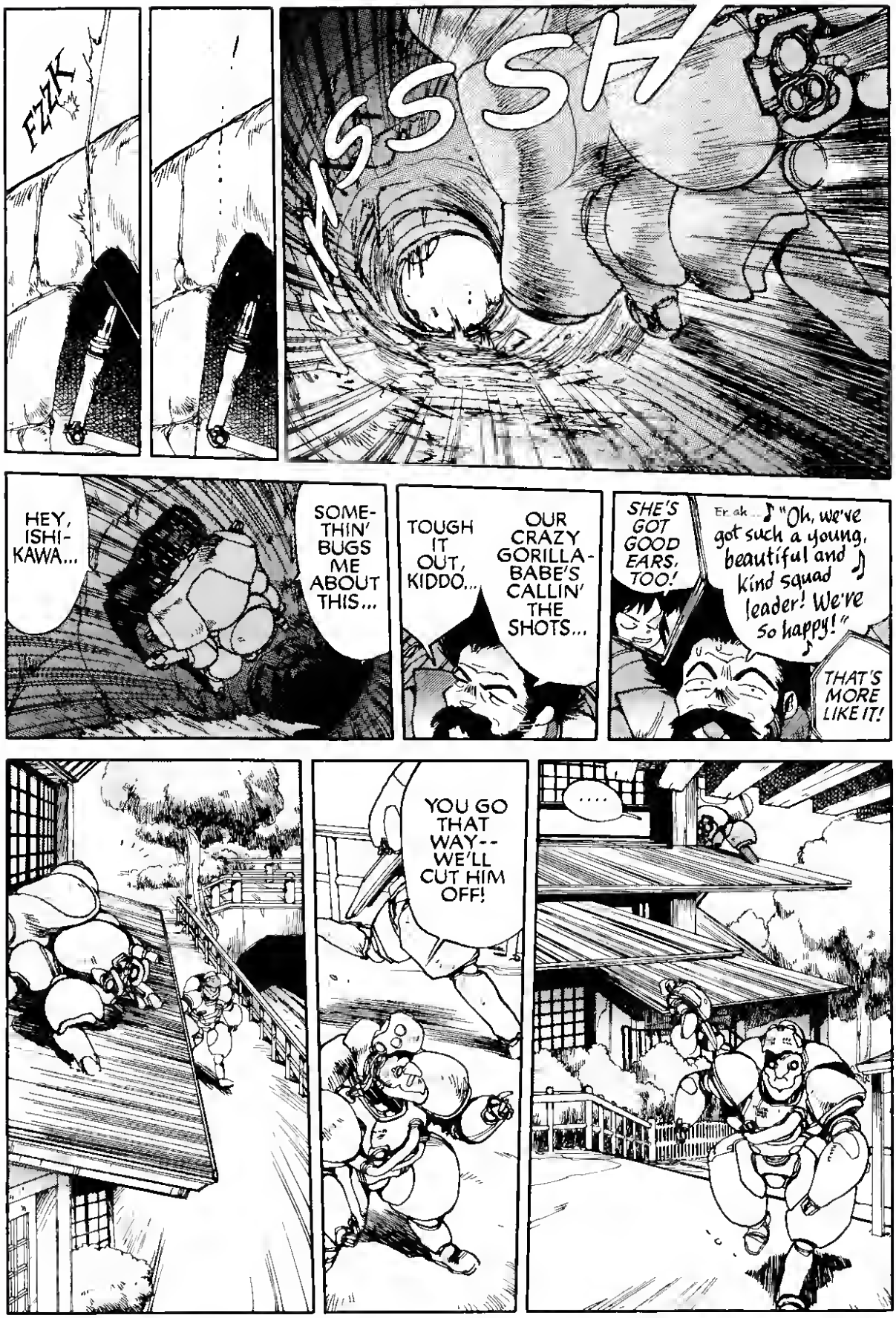

IN A WORST CASE SITUATION THIS'LL AT LEAST GIVE US AN EXCUSE. GOOD THINKING, EH?
SO YOU'LL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY, AND RETIRE FROM THE SCENE SO THE SQUAD'LL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE, RIGHT ?

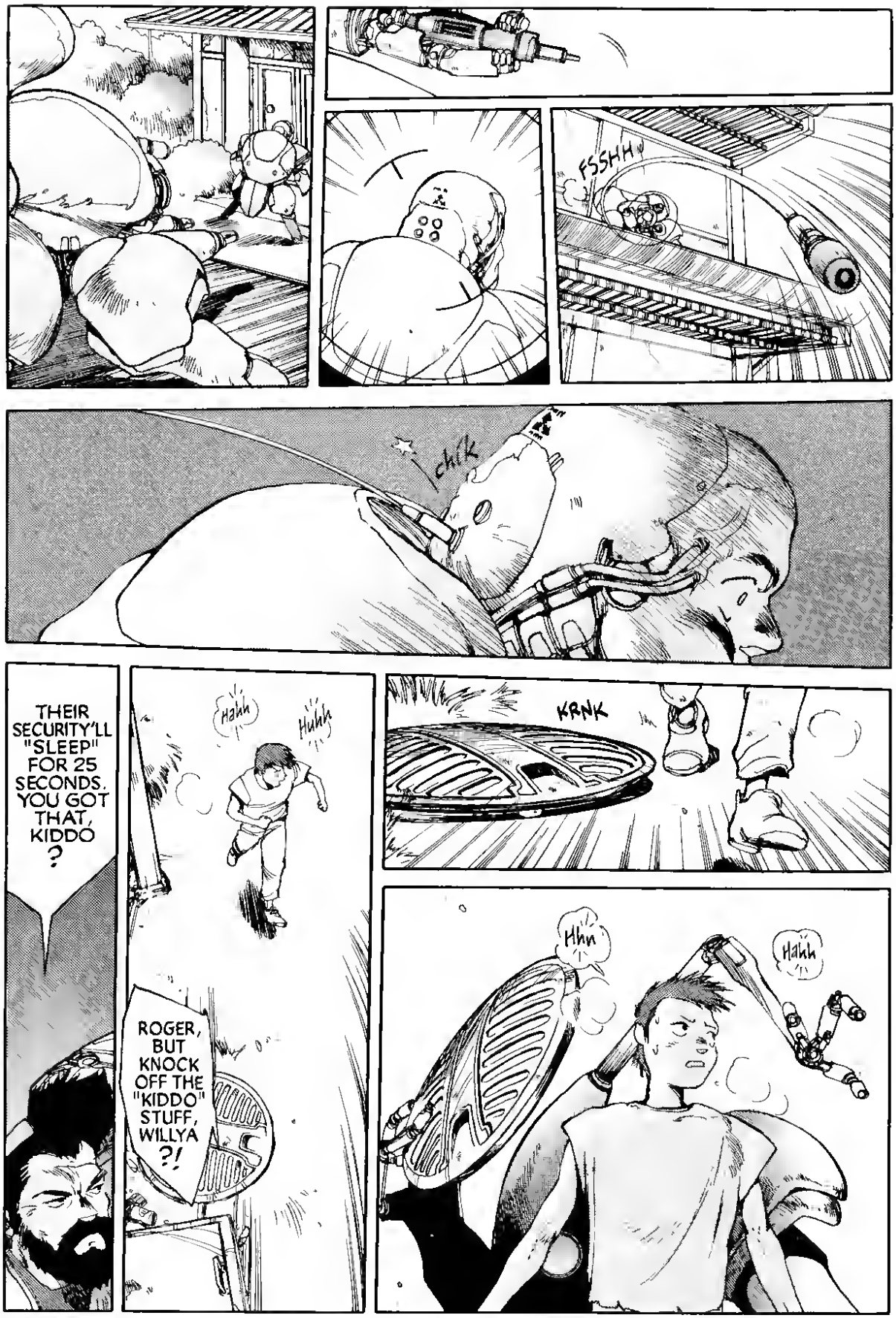
DON'T COUNT ON IT.
'COURSE I APPRECIATE THE SENTIMENT, THOUGH.

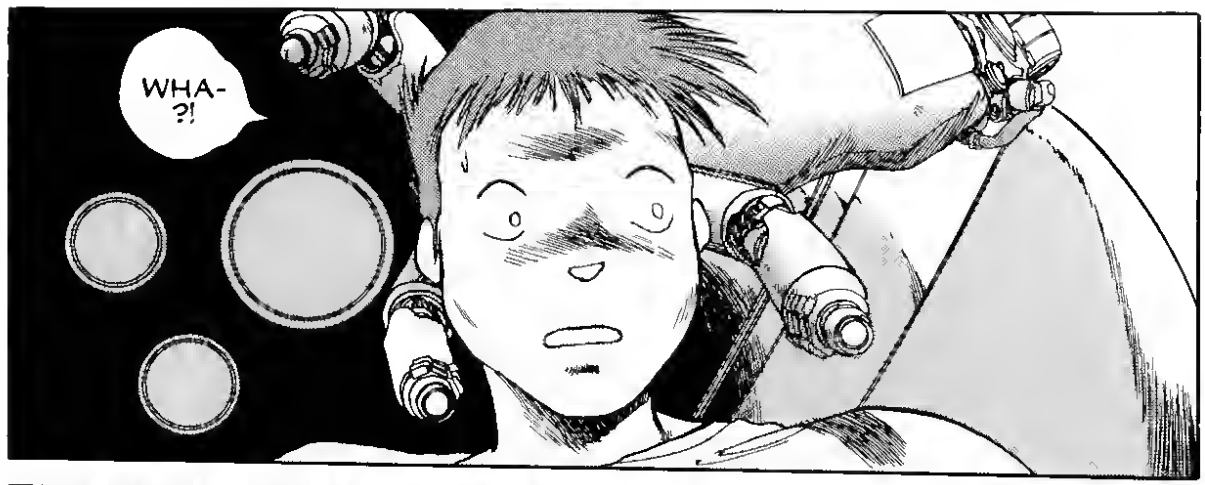
PHUTT
SKCHHH

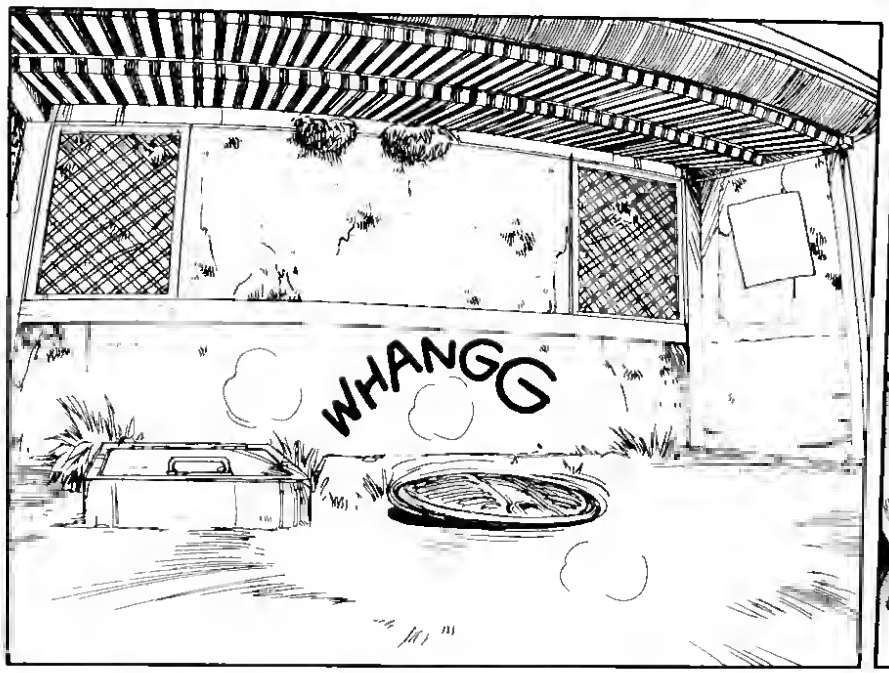


VWHIPP
SKRAK

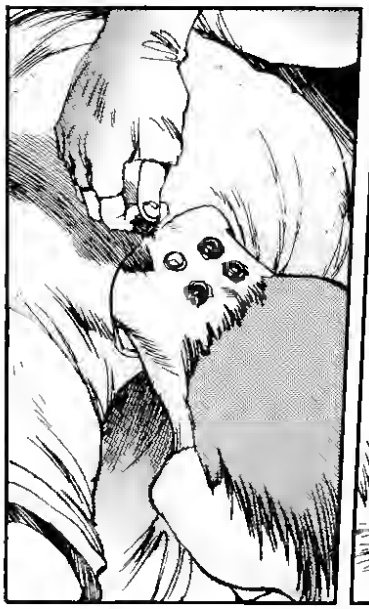

FZZK
KSSH
HEY, ISHI-KAWA...
SOME-THIN' BUGS ME ABOUT THIS...
TOUGH IT OUT, KIDDO...
OUR CRAZY GORILLA-BABE'S CALLIN' THE SHOTS...
SHE'S GOT GOOD EARS, TOO!
Er, ah... ♪ "Oh, we've got such a young, beautiful and kind squad leader! We're so happy!" ♪
THAT'S MORE LIKE IT!
YOU GO THAT WAY-- WE'LL CUT HIM OFF!
....

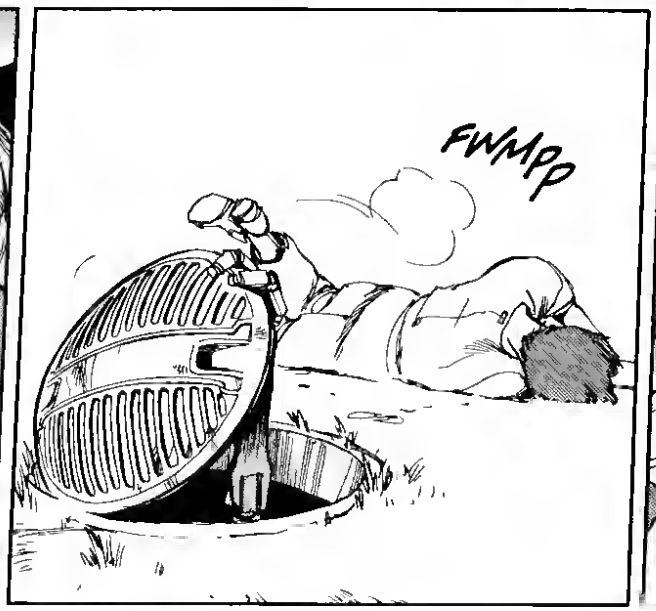

FSSHH
chik
THEIR SECURITY'LL "SLEEP" FOR 25 SECONDS. YOU GOT THAT, KIDDO ?
Hahh
Huhh
ROGER, BUT KNOCK OFF THE "KIDDO" STUFF, WILLYA ?!
KRNK
Hhn
Hahh


WHA-
?!

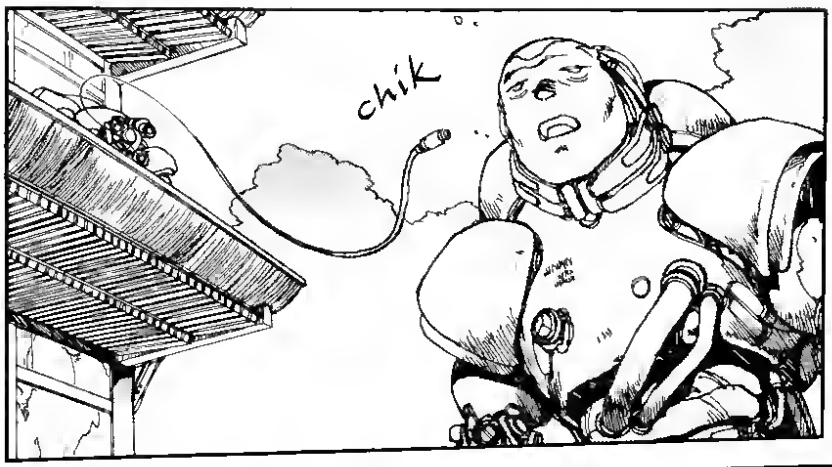

WHANGG

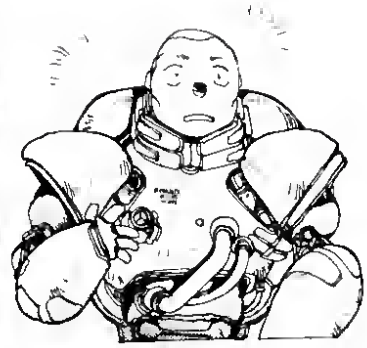
phtt

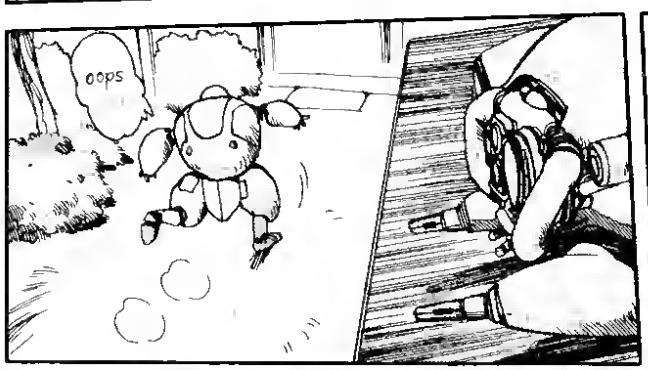


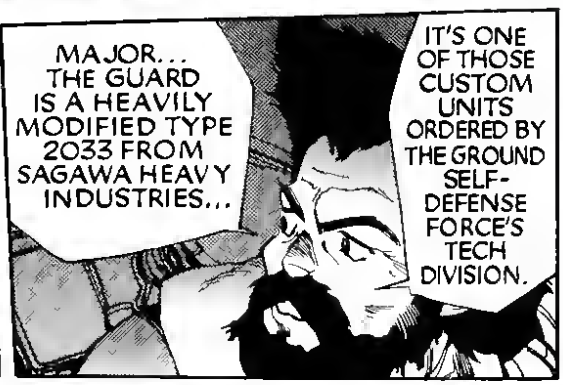

FWMPP

WELL?
PRETTY SLICK, eh?

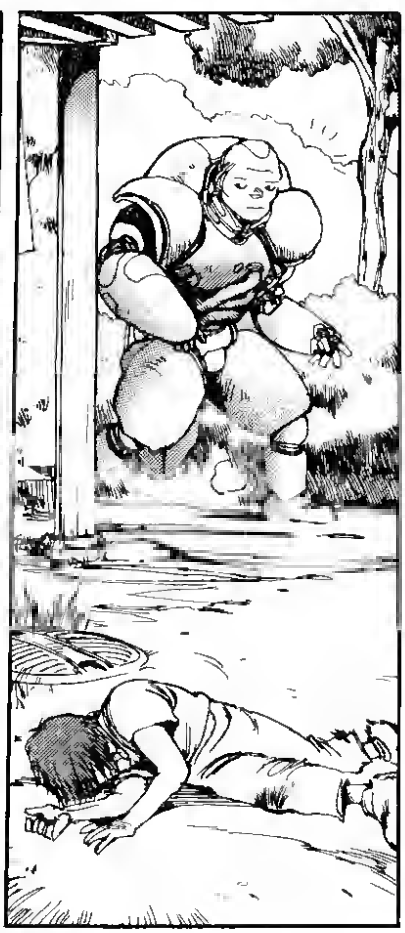

chik




oops


MAJOR... THE GUARD IS A HEAVILY MODIFIED TYPE 2033 FROM SAGAWA HEAVY INDUSTRIES...
IT'S ONE OF THOSE CUSTOM UNITS ORDERED BY THE GROUND SELF-DEFENSE FORCE'S TECH DIVISION.

BET IT'S A CYBORG THAT'S HAD BLACK-MARKET MODS...
GOVERN-MENT-ISSUE OPTO-*CNS*, ANYWAY.



HMM... SO THIS REALLY *IS* A GOVERN-MENT FACILITY...

SO IF WE CHARGE IN HERE OLD APE-FACE'LL HAVE TO RESIGN... HMM... SOMETHING STINKS HERE...
LOOKS FISHY, ALL RIGHT...

HUH! Y'FIGGER HE FAINTED?
KIND OF AN ANTI-CLIMAX, huh...
kng
THREE ESCAPE ATTEMPTS AND THEY BRAIN-WASH HIM...
POOR KID...
HE KNOWS THE RULES. THIS IS A SUICIDE ATTEMPT...
GIVE IN TO THE PRESSURE AND THERE'RE ONLY TWO CHOICES...
...
GHOST-BACK OR GHOST-OUT--CYBERBRAINWASH OR DEATH.
SO THIS IS A GOVERNMENT BRAIN-WASH CENTER...
WHY THE HELL DOES SECURITY WANT US TO DO AN OFFICIAL INVESTI-GATION...
IT'S A TRAP, MAJOR. APE-FACE PROBABLY NEVER GAVE YOU THE ORDER. HELL, IT'S PROBABLY ALL A VR SIM...
GET REAL, BATOU--MY BARRIER ELEMENTS AREN'T THAT CHEAP!

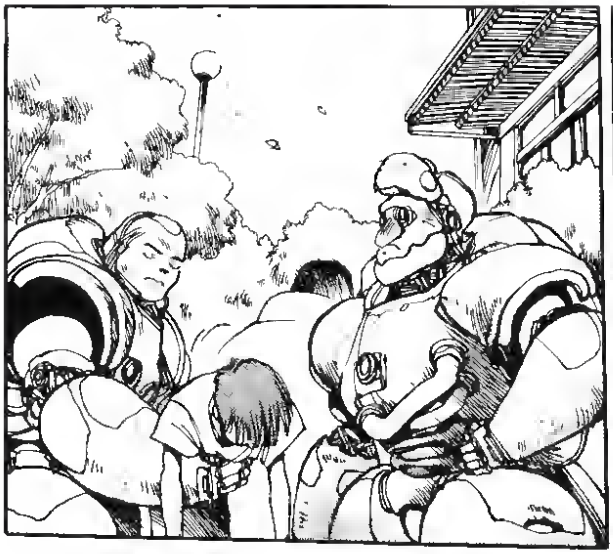
WELL, EITHER WAY, CHARGING IN THERE'LL CREATE A REAL SCANDAL...
EITHER WE'RE GONNA GET BURNED BY THIS, OR SOME POLITICIAN WILL...OR THE KIDS WILL.

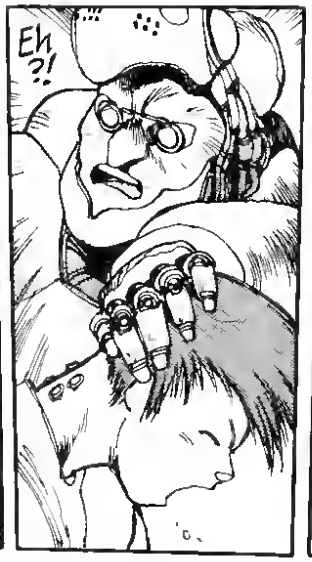
OKAY, MEN! PREPARE TO ATTACK!
oh MY! GHOST!
IF THE BRAIN-WASH MECH GETS IN THE WAY, WE'LL TAKE IT OUT!

UNITS LIKE OURS ARE ALWAYS NECESSARY, SO WE DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO LOSE.
A SCANDAL OP, WITH POLITICIANS DETHRONED AND KIDS BRAIN-WASHED...
beep

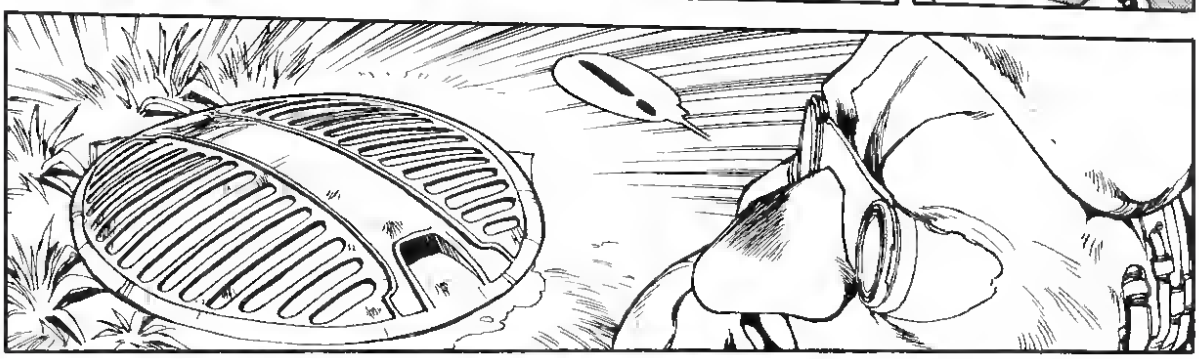
WE MADE A DEAL WITH APE-FACE TO GET RID OF THE ASSHOLES WHO PULL THIS KIND OF SHIT.
SO LET'S DO IT!
KSHH
FSHHH
KSSHH

A LITTLE VOICE IS URGING ME ON...
MY GHOST!




Eh ?!

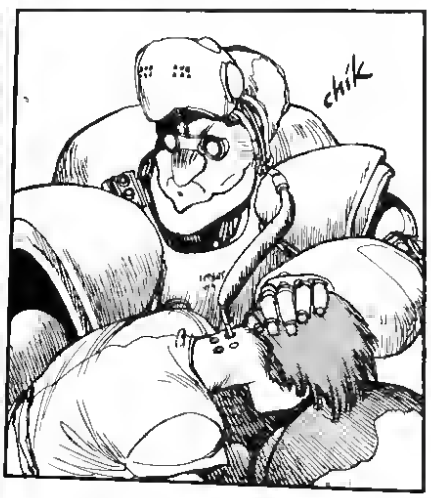
?



QUICK! SECURE THE LOCAL STORM DRAINS!
WE'VE BEEN BRANCHED !
YOU'RE KID-DING !

DAMN! THEY'VE DETECTED US!
TOGUSA! GET YOUR ASS OUT OF THERE!
clik clik clik
beep
breep

THESE GUYS ARE PROS !
SWITCH COM-LINKS TO ATTACK BARRIER MODE


chik

PAZ! SAITO! GET TOGUSA OUT OF THERE! ISHIKAWA, COVER THEM !
BOMA! SECURE THE ESCAPE ROUTE! BATOU AND I'LL HELP YOU!
bleep
tak tak

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?! THEIR STRIKE VIRUS GET YOU?!
I'M BEING LOCKED! I--
ZAKK
AIEE!
HKK!
FMP
LET'S GO BATOU!
SHE'S JUST A SPEAKER! SECURITY'LL REPAIR HER!
THEY'LL RE-PROGRAM HER?
SOMETHING SAD ABOUT THESE GHOSTLESS 'BOTS...
ESPECIALLY THE TYPE THAT BLEED...
MMMM
VPM

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C'MON! I HEARD A NOISE FROM THE STORM DRAIN OUTFALL!
KCHAK
BKAM
YAIEE!
BKAM
WHSST
MOVE YOUR ASS, YOU IDIOT!
...
THAT'S IT... I AIN'T MOVING ANOTHER FOOT.
YOU GO ON...
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?!

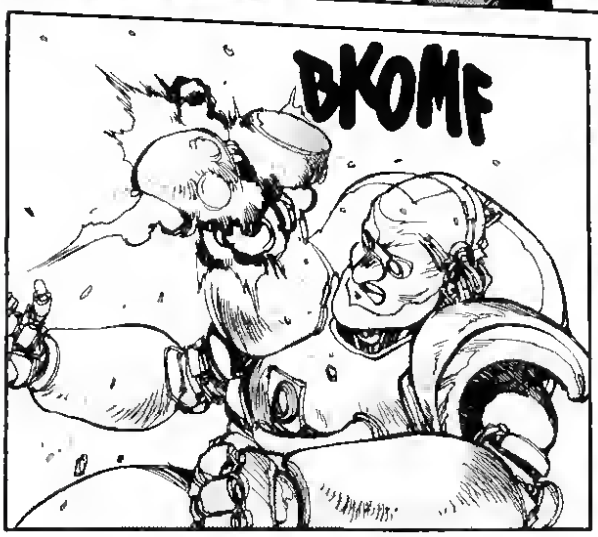
SOMETHING'S TELLING ME NOT TO WASTE MY LIFE!
THE WAR'S OVER... AND I DON'T WANT TO KILL ANY-MORE!
ARE YOU OUTTA YOUR GODDAMN MIND ?!
YOU'VE GOTTA HAVE GUTS, MAN!
PHUT PHUT PHUT
OKAY, BUDDY-- YOU ASKED FOR IT...
chik chik chik chik chik
Hmph!
WHA- ?!
KCCH
BLOOSH
whssht

SKSSH
TOGUSA LOOKS A LITTLE BENT OUTTA SHAPE, MAJOR...
WELL, HELP HIM AND GET OUT OF THERE!
WE'RE GOING OUT-SIDE?
OF COURSE, STUPID! WHAT DO YOU THINK WE'RE DOING ?!!
SHIT, JUST SLAP A CABLE ON HIM AND YANK HIM OUT! THAT'LL BE FASTER!
Yeep... THE GENTLE PRINCESS IS SO HARSH WITH HER MEN...
!
KWAGGH
YAALP!
HEY! ISN'T THAT ISHIKAWA'S FUCHIKOMA?
WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON?

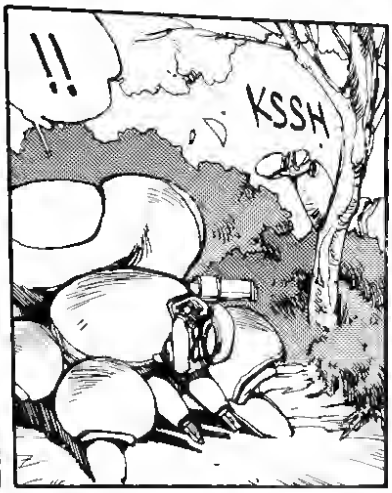
BKAM BKAM BKAM
VWHIPZIP
NOW THAT'S ONE SHITTY GODDAMN SIGHTING MECHANISM...
ISHIKAWA! ISHI-KAWA!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?!
UH-?
SKRUSH KUSH
MAJOR!! THE GUARD'S GOT A CYBERBRAIN WASHER--
!
ALL FUCHIKOMAS! CUT CIRCUITS! SWITCH TO AUTISTIC MODE!
KCHK
HNNK!

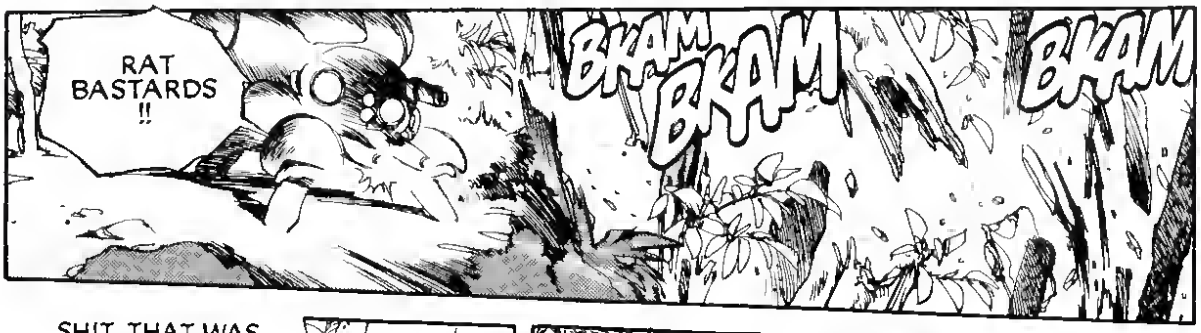
?!
ZZZK
Wha-
?!
SKRAK
VREEEE
SKSHH
HHHHH
NEVER THOUGHT HE'D BE ABLE TO INFILTRATE FASTER THAN MY ATTACK BARRIER COULD COME UP!
12
KSSH
WHDD
FUCHIKOMA! REPLICATE HIS GHOST INFILTRATOR KEY AND SEND IT BACK AT HIM!!
ONCE YOU CRACK HIS ICE, THROW A DELTA-LEVEL ATTACK BARRIER AT HIM!

!


BKOMF

AH!


!!
KSSH

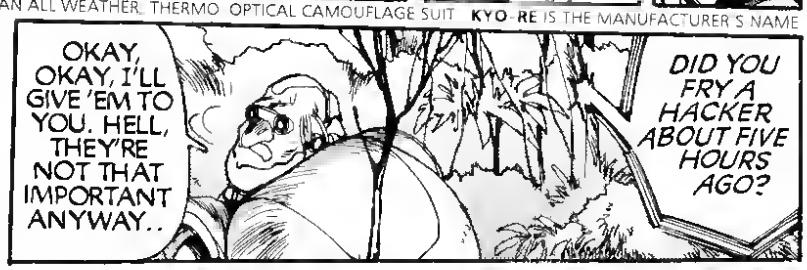

RAT BASTARDS !!
BKAM
BKAM
BKAM

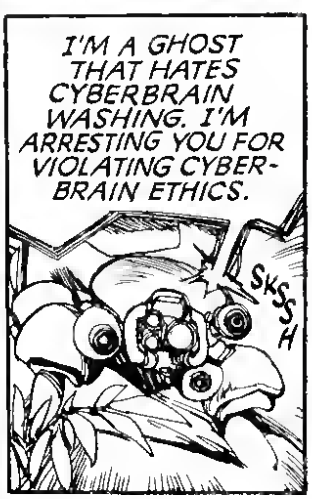
SHIT, THAT WAS CLOSE! GOOD THING I HAD MY ACTIVE PROTECTOR SUIT ON... I'VE GOTTA WIPE THAT WEIRDO SQUAD LEADER BROAD...
BKAM
BKAM

B-beep
breep!
DUMMY

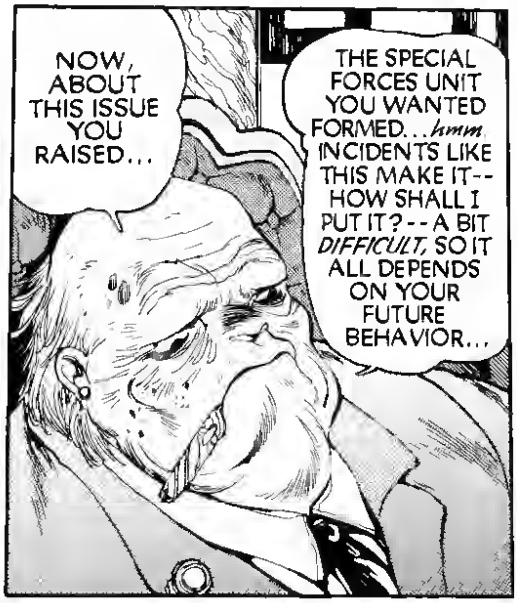
vmmmmm

* NAME OF AN ALL WEATHER, THERMO OPTICAL CAMOUFLAGE SUIT. KYO-RE IS THE MANUFACTURER'S NAME





YOU GUYS FROM SECURITY? WHAT CAN THEY DO?! NOTHING'S GOING TO CHANGE, YOU KNOW...
NEITHER THE FACILITIES OR THE CYBERBRAIN WASHING...
VMMM
CHAK
THANK GOD, MA'AM! YOU'VE COME TO FINALLY FREE US, HAVEN'T YOU ?
WHAT ?!
WHAT DO YOU WANT ?
DO YOU JUST WANT TO EAT AND CONTRIBUTE NOTHING, TO BE BRAINWASHED BY MEDIA TRASH? TO SACRIFICE THE NATION'S FUTURE FOR YOUR OWN SELFISHNESS?
BUT... BUT... THAT'S NOT WHAT...
LISTEN, KID-- YOU'VE GOT A GHOST, AND A BRAIN... AND YOU CAN ACCESS A CYBER-BRAIN.
VMMMM
CREATE YOUR OWN FUTURE...
B B BUT IT'S EASY FOR YOU TO SAY THAT



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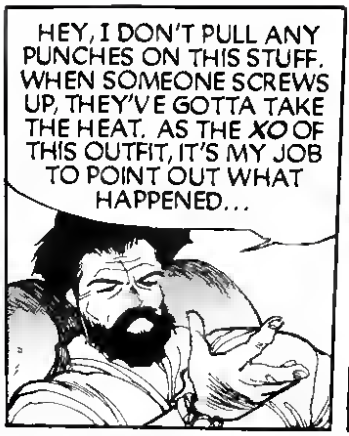
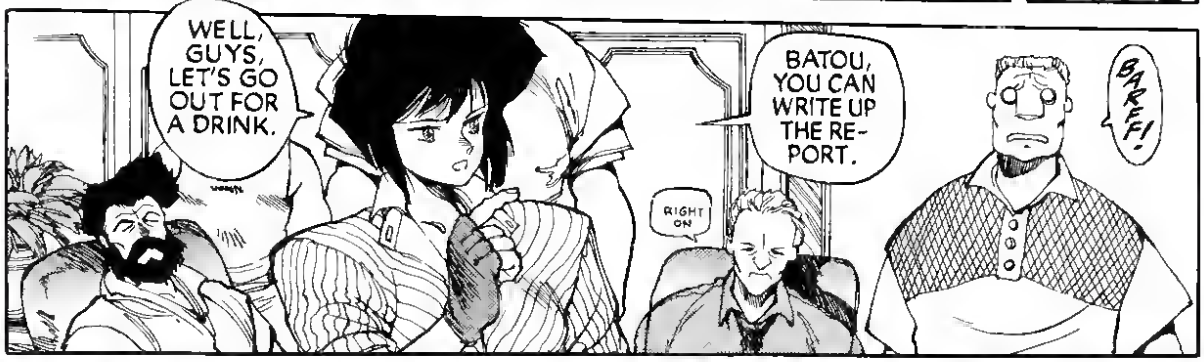
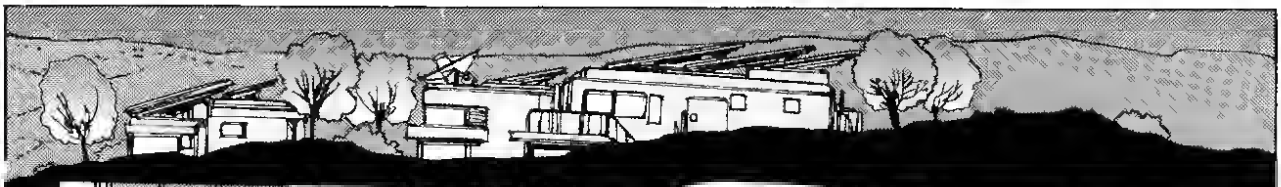
HE TOOK A LOOK AT THIS PHOTO AND WENT HOME...
YECCH, OLD MAN ISHIKAWA WITH HIS FEELTHY PICTURES AGAIN!


HEY, I DON'T PULL ANY PUNCHES ON THIS STUFF. WHEN SOMEONE SCREWS UP, THEY'VE GOTTA TAKE THE HEAT. AS THE XO OF THIS OUTFIT, IT'S MY JOB TO POINT OUT WHAT HAPPENED...

HMPH


WELL, GUYS, LET'S GO OUT FOR A DRINK.
BATOU, YOU CAN WRITE UP THE REPORT.
RIGHT ON
BARF!

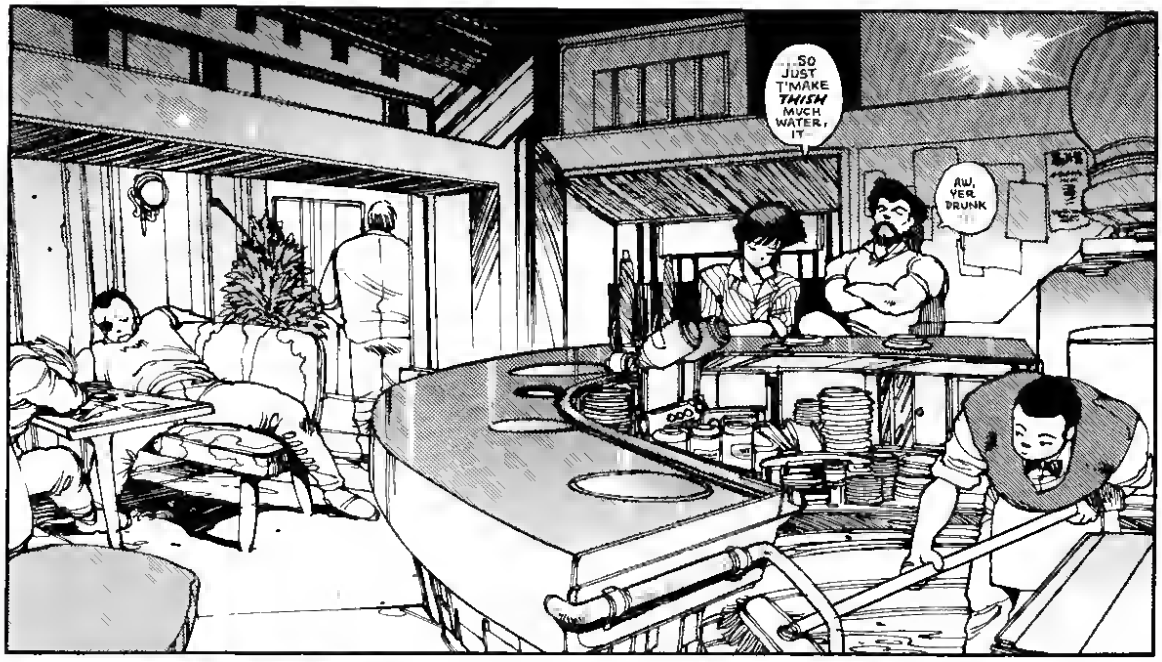


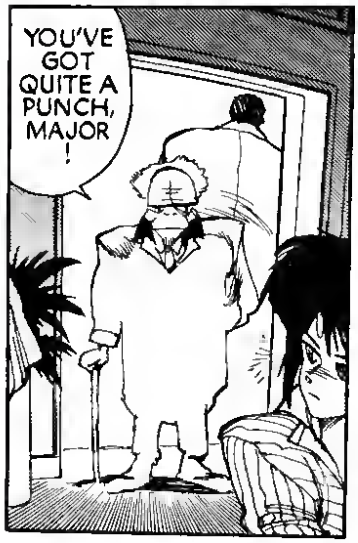
OH, YOUR DADDY'S SUCH AN IDIOT...
NNN

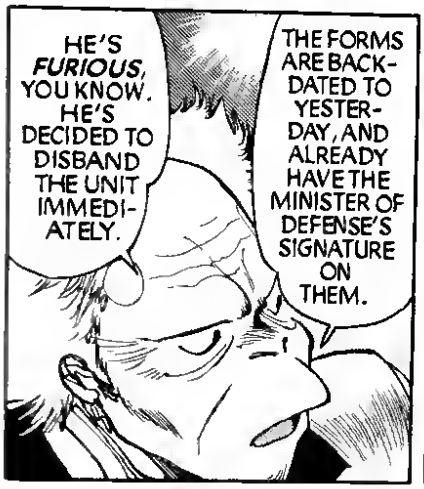
DINNER'LL BE READY IN A MINUTE DEAR...
THANK, HONEY

DAMN! WISH I HADN'T SCREWED UP AND LET EVERYONE DOWN! HOW CAN I TELL HER I'M GONNA BE BUSTED TO BUCK PRIVATE...?
Sigh

DEAR ?!
NOW WHERE'D HE GET TO?
JOBS!
CHANGE YOUR CAREER





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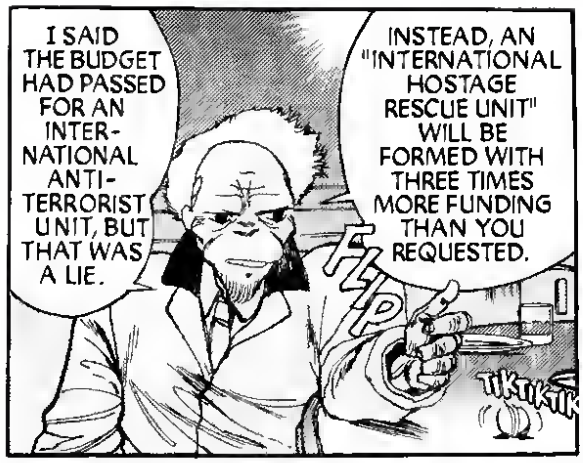
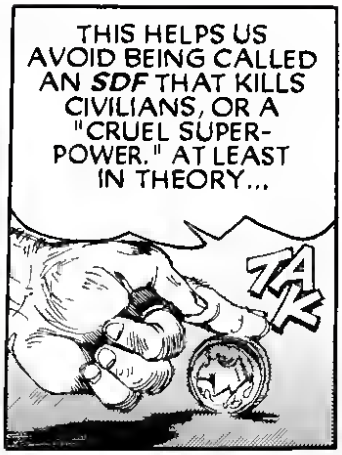

I SAID THE BUDGET HAD PASSED FOR AN INTER-NATIONAL ANTI-TERRORIST UNIT, BUT THAT WAS A LIE.
INSTEAD, AN "INTERNATIONAL HOSTAGE RESCUE UNIT" WILL BE FORMED WITH THREE TIMES MORE FUNDING THAN YOU REQUESTED.
FLIP
TIKTIKTIK

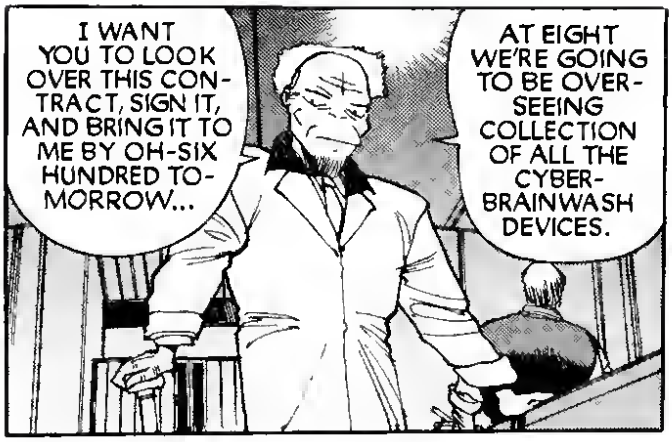

THIS HELPS US AVOID BEING CALLED AN *SDF* THAT KILLS CIVILIANS, OR A "CRUEL SUPER-POWER." AT LEAST IN THEORY...
TAK

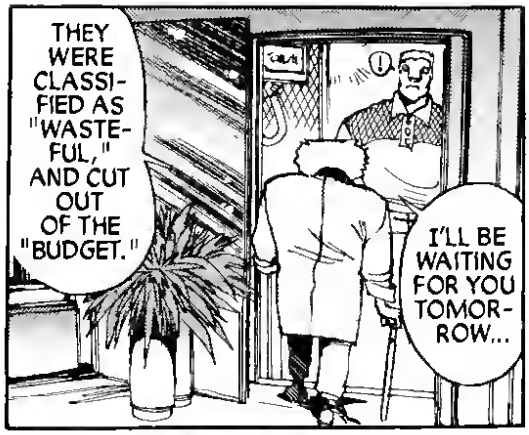
EIGHTY PERCENT OF THE BUDGET GOES TO THE FORMATION OF A SPECIAL POWER-SUIT ASSAULT FORCE...
I'LL HAVE FULL RESPONSIBILITY, REPORTING ONLY TO THE PRIME MINISTER. THE UNIT STRUCTURE'LL BE BASED ON SKILL AND MERIT, WITH NO RANKS, AND GIVEN TOP PRIORITY IN PRO-CUREMENT.

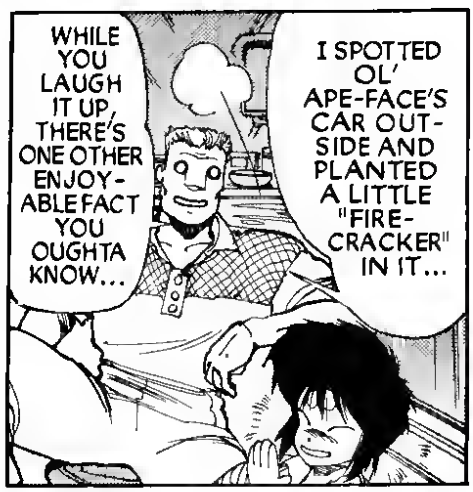
YOU'LL IDENTIFY THE SOURCE OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY AND ELIMINATE IT. IT'S THE SORT OF OFFENSIVE UNIT YOU AND I HAVE BOTH DREAMED OF FOR YEARS... BUT NOW IT'S UP TO YOU AND YOUR MEN.

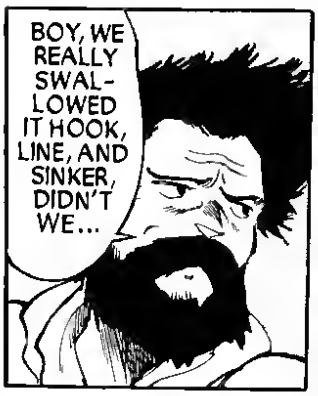
FLICK
THAP

ANOTHER ROUND OF THE SAME FOR EVERY-ONE...


I WANT YOU TO LOOK OVER THIS CONTRACT, SIGN IT, AND BRING IT TO ME BY OH-SIX HUNDRED TOMORROW...
AT EIGHT WE'RE GOING TO BE OVERSEEING COLLECTION OF ALL THE CYBER-BRAINWASH DEVICES.

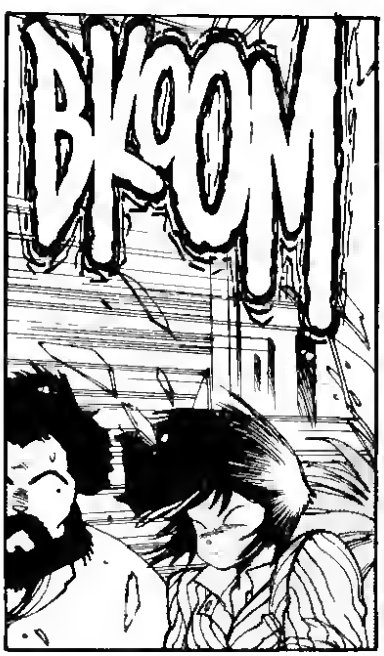

THEY WERE CLASSIFIED AS "WASTEFUL," AND CUT OUT OF THE "BUDGET."
I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU TOMORROW...

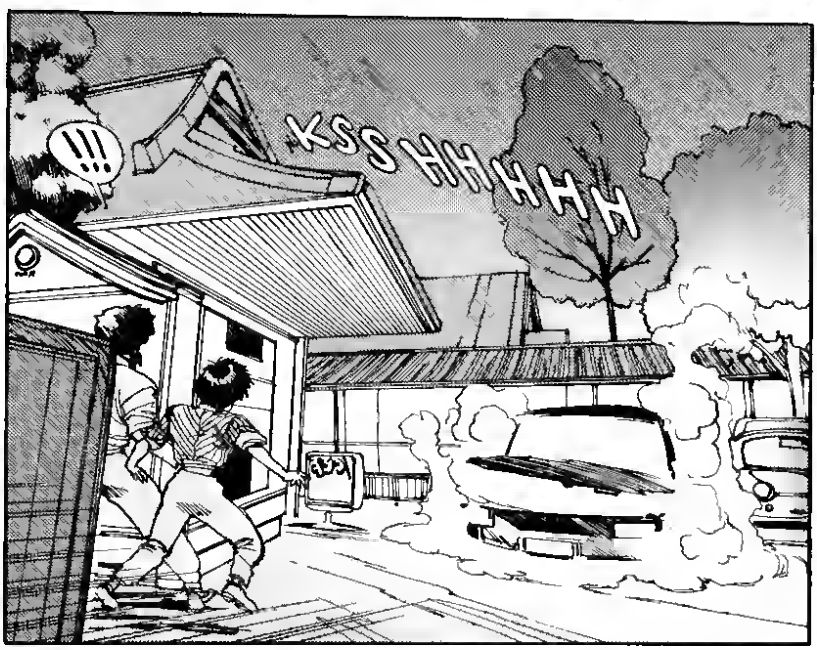

WHILE YOU LAUGH IT UP, THERE'S ONE OTHER ENJOYABLE FACT YOU OUGHTA KNOW...
I SPOTTED OL' APE-FACE'S CAR OUTSIDE AND PLANTED A LITTLE "FIRE-CRACKER" IN IT...


BOY, WE REALLY SWALLOWED IT HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER, DIDN'T WE...

Hee hee hee

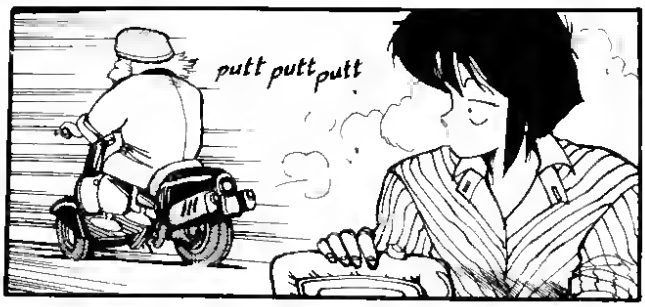
YOU WHAT ?!


BKOOM

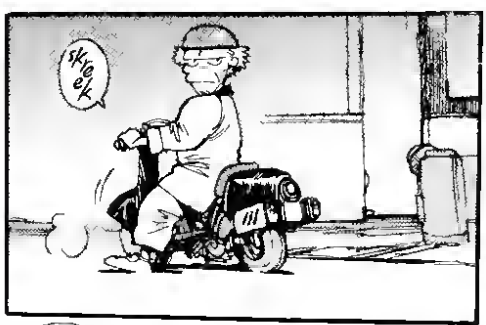

!!!
KSSHHHHH

CHIEF !!
SKRAKK

YOU THINK YOU'RE FIXING A FLAT TIRE OR SOMETHING?! PERSONALLY, I'D TAKE THAT CAR INTO THE REPAIR SHOP IF I WERE YOU. BUT DON'T BE LATE TOMORROW.


putt putt putt

SHIT! YOU OLD FART !!
KANGG
MADE US LOOK LIKE IDIOTS AGAIN!


SKREEK

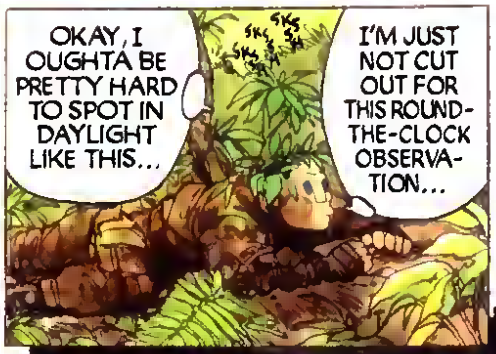
JUST MAKE SURE YOU PAY US TOP DOLLAR, HON...
Eh heh heh heh heh-heh

LISTEN, THERE'S NO MONEY TO BUY MEAT OR EVEN AN AIR CONDITIONER... YOU GUYS GOTTA WORK HARDER...
IT'S BREAK TIME FOR ME...
NO SNACKS TODAY 'CAUSE SOMEONE'S SLACKIN' OFF AROUND HERE...
KANGG
KANGG
KANGG
KANGG

# 03

JUNK JUNGLE

27. 7. 2029



GORGON MINE: AN ENGLISH-TYPE ANTI-PERSONNEL CANISTER MINE THAT JUMPS UP ABOUT TWO METERS WHEN TRIGGERED AND THEN SCATTERS AROUND A HUNDRED MINI-MINES (TRIGGERED TWO SECONDS AFTER LANDING BY ANY VIBRATION OCCURRING WITHIN A THREE METER RADIUS).

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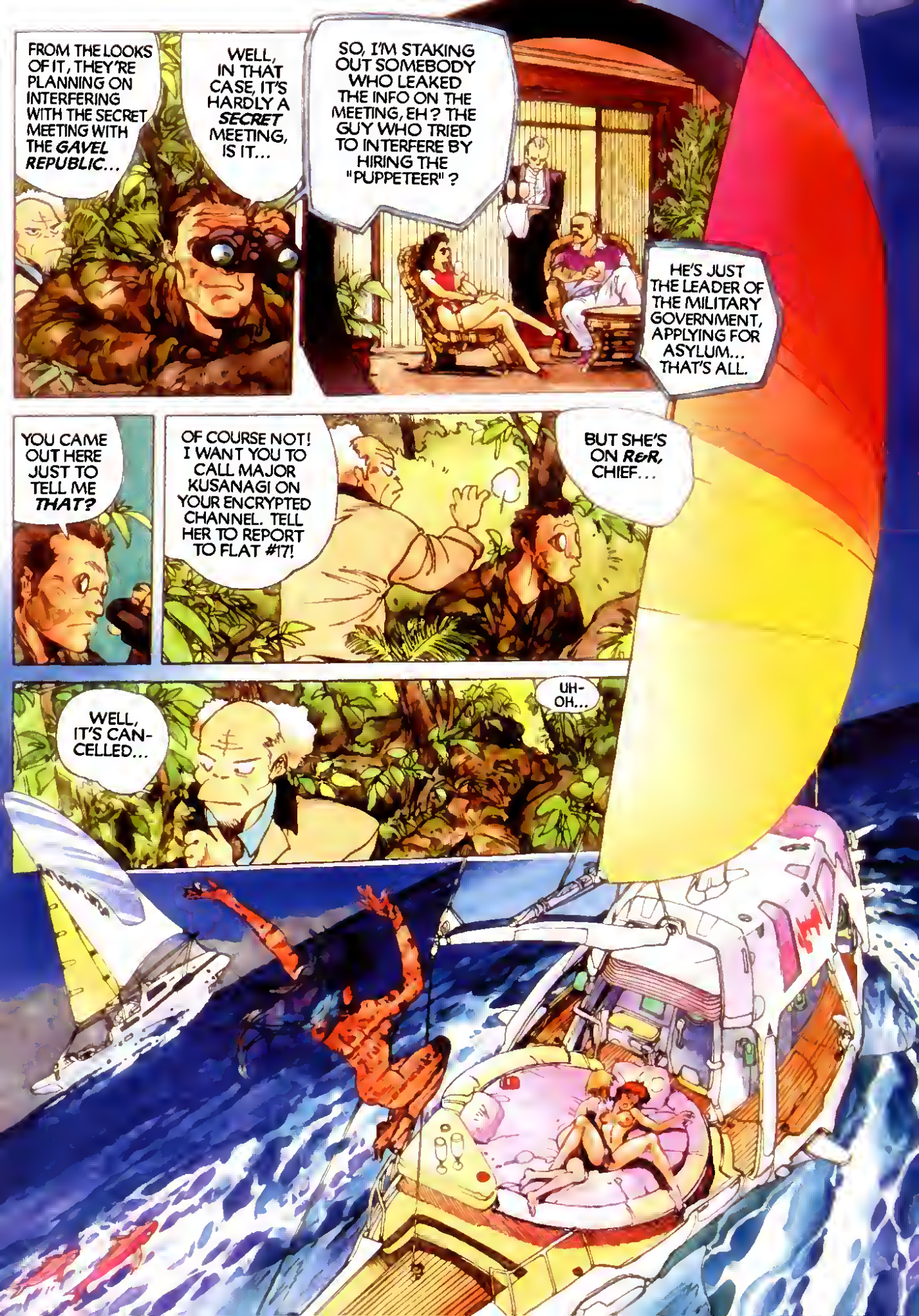
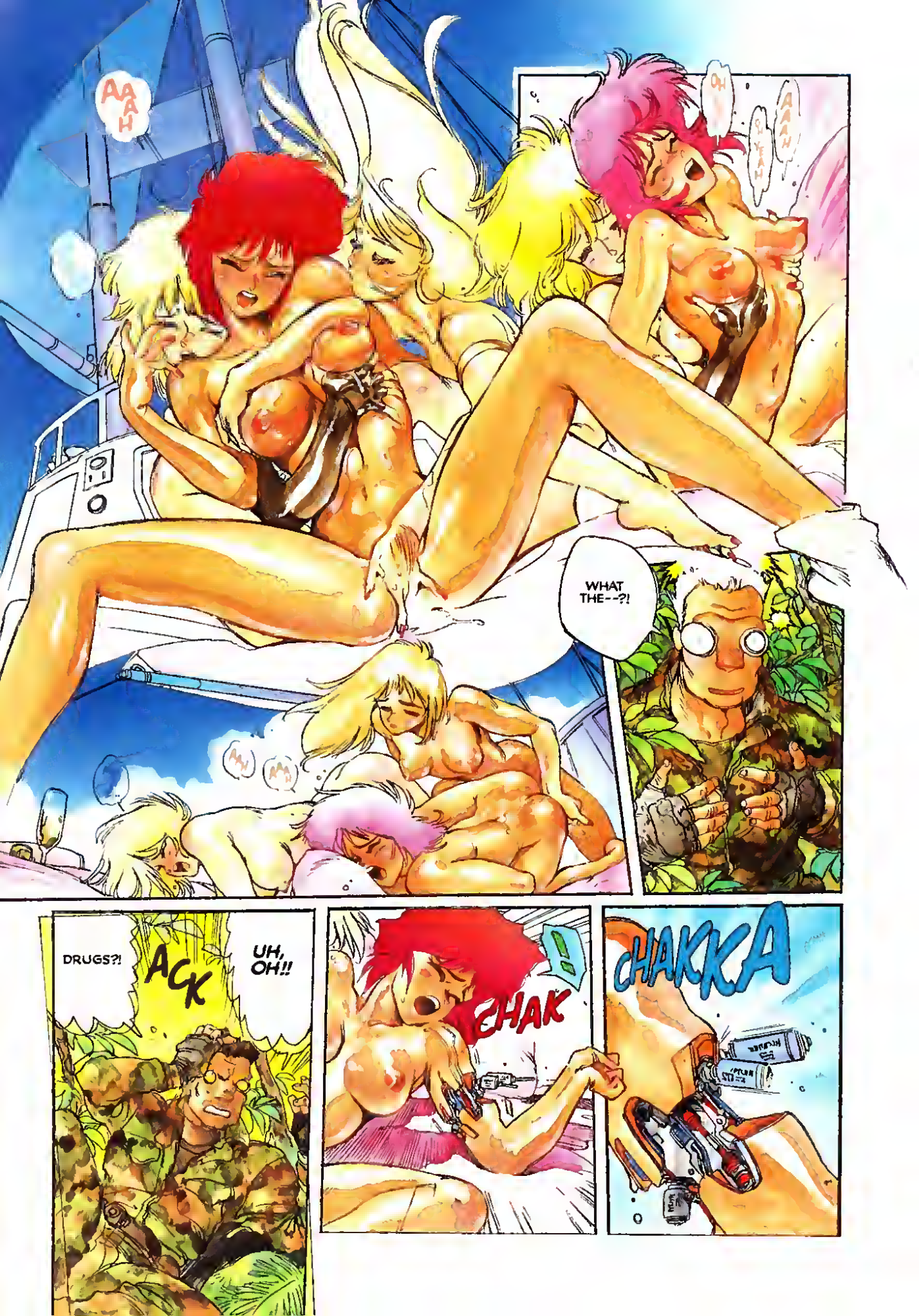
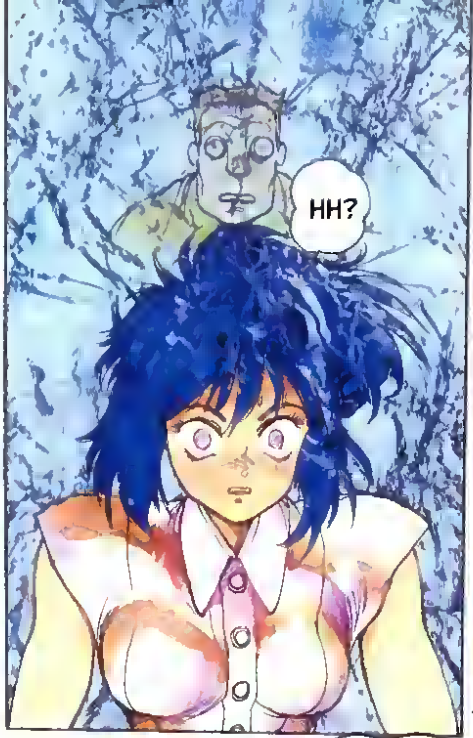
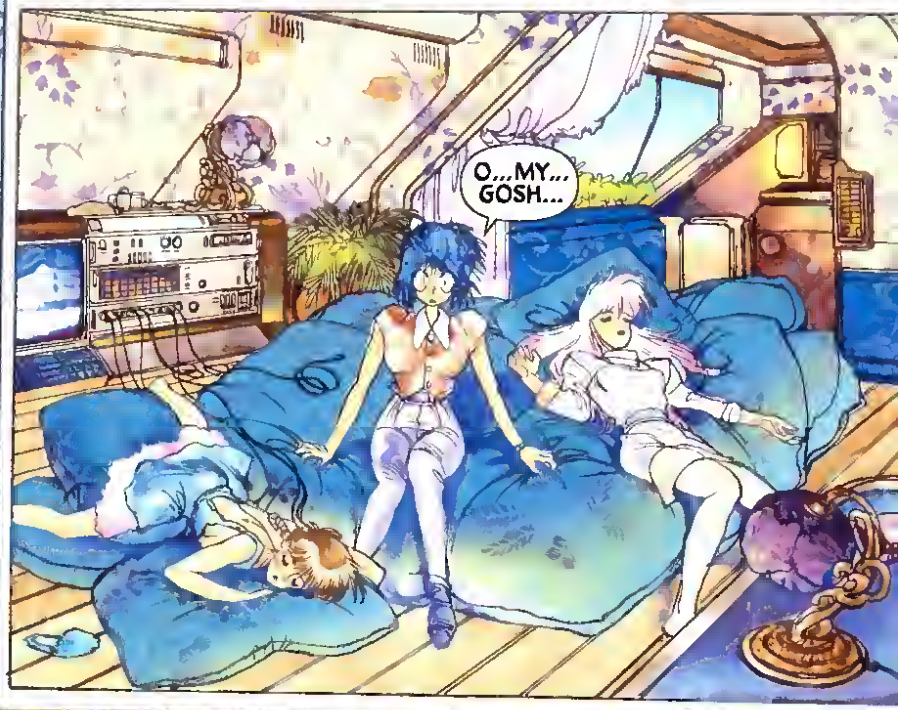
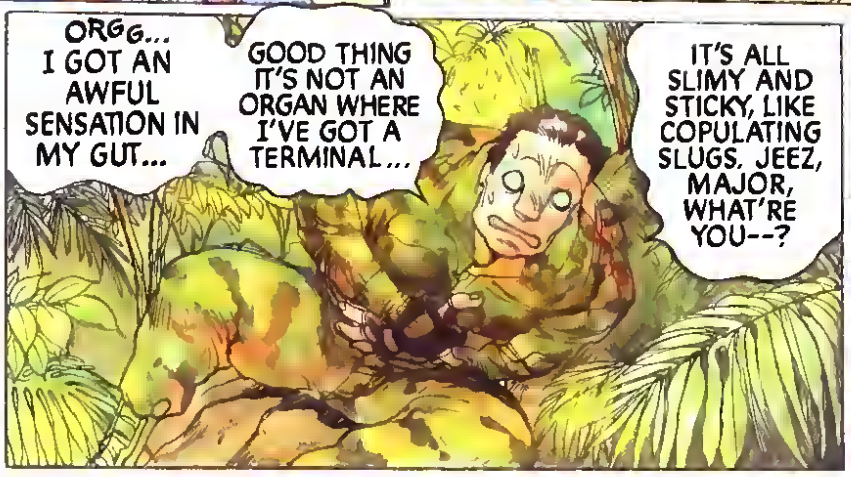

FROM THE LOOKS OF IT, THEY'RE PLANNING ON INTERFERING WITH THE SECRET MEETING WITH THE GAVEL REPUBLIC...
WELL, IN THAT CASE, IT'S HARDLY A SECRET MEETING, IS IT...
SO, I'M STAKING OUT SOMEBODY WHO LEAKED THE INFO ON THE MEETING, EH? THE GUY WHO TRIED TO INTERFERE BY HIRING THE "PUPPETEER"?
HE'S JUST THE LEADER OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT, APPLYING FOR ASYLUM... THAT'S ALL.
YOU CAME OUT HERE JUST TO TELL ME THAT?
OF COURSE NOT! I WANT YOU TO CALL MAJOR KUSANAGI ON YOUR ENCRYPTED CHANNEL. TELL HER TO REPORT TO FLAT #17!
BUT SHE'S ON R&R, CHIEF...
WELL, IT'S CANCELLED...
UH-OH...

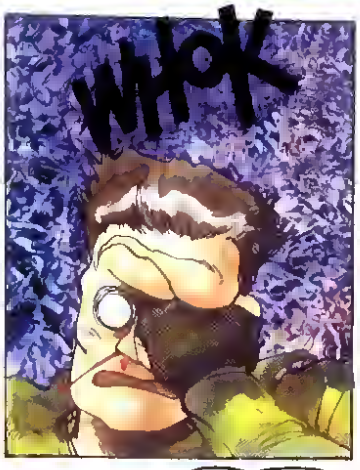
WHAT ABOUT PHALANX?
IT'S IN THE ENDORNO PROBE DEVICE... ≥BOOO≤...
PRICES ARE GOING UP...
GIVES ME AN ADRENALINE RUSH...
SKIN TACTILE ELEMENTS 16²/CM². WITH MOTOKO IT'S GREAT, CUZ WE CAN MANUFACTURE IT DIRECTLY.
AND WITH FIBER OPTICS, THERE'S NO NOISE GENERATED, EITHER!
I'M GOING TO SHIFT TO MULTI-MODE AND START RECORDING NOW...
OKAY....
GOSH, WHERE'D YOU FIND AN EQUALIZER WITH UP TO FIVE TIMES THE NUMBER OF TACTILE TRANSFORMATION ZONES...?
I PUT IT TOGETHER MYSELF! IT'S A PROTOTYPE MICROSLAVE APPLICATION...

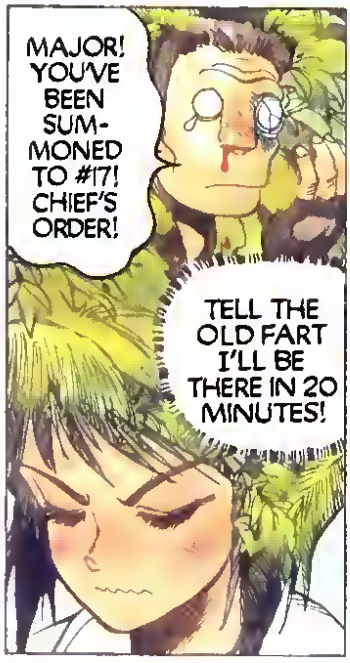

AAAH
OH
YEAH
AAAH
WHAT THE--?!
AAH
AAH
DRUGS?!
ACK
UH, OH!!
CHAK
CHAKKA

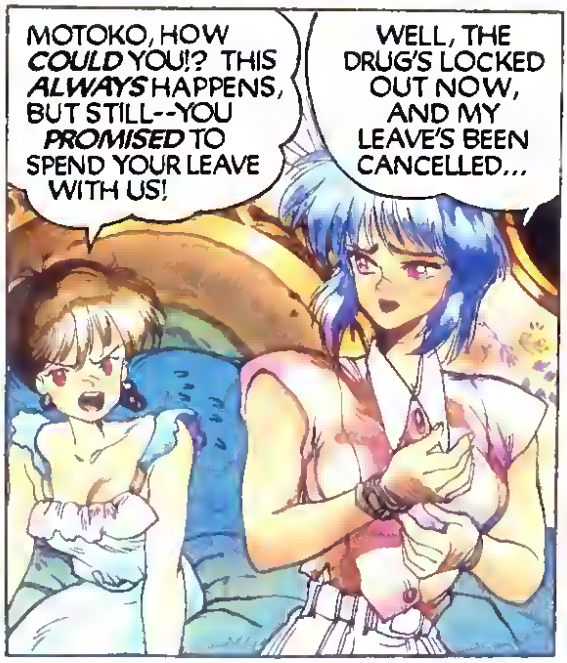

HH?

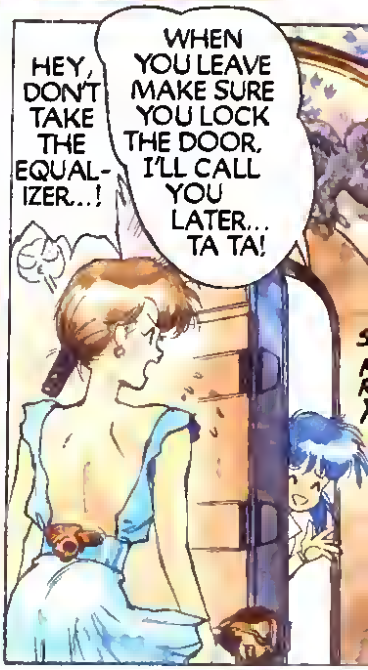

O...MY... GOSH...


ORGG... I GOT AN AWFUL SENSATION IN MY GUT...
GOOD THING IT'S NOT AN ORGAN WHERE I'VE GOT A TERMINAL...
IT'S ALL SLIMY AND STICKY, LIKE COPULATING SLUGS. JEEZ, MAJOR, WHAT'RE YOU--?


WHOK


MAJOR! YOU'VE BEEN SUM-MONED TO #17! CHIEF'S ORDER!
TELL THE OLD FART I'LL BE THERE IN 20 MINUTES!


MOTOKO, HOW *COULD* YOU!? THIS *ALWAYS* HAPPENS, BUT STILL--YOU *PROMISED* TO SPEND YOUR LEAVE WITH US!
WELL, THE DRUG'S LOCKED OUT NOW, AND MY LEAVE'S BEEN CANCELLED...


HEY, DON'T TAKE THE EQUAL-IZER...!
WHEN YOU LEAVE MAKE SURE YOU LOCK THE DOOR. I'LL CALL YOU LATER... TA TA!

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP

WHUPP WHUPP

WELL, MR. ARAMAKI--YOU NEED SOMETHING FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY?

GOOD MORNING, SIR!

IT'S ABOUT THE GAVEL REPUBLIC, SIR..

IT COULD HARDLY BE THAT IMPORTANT. WE'VE GIVEN GAVEL AN "E" RANKING--6 FOR NEED, 1 FOR PROBLEMS...

...AND THEY HAVEN'T GONE NUCLEAR YET.

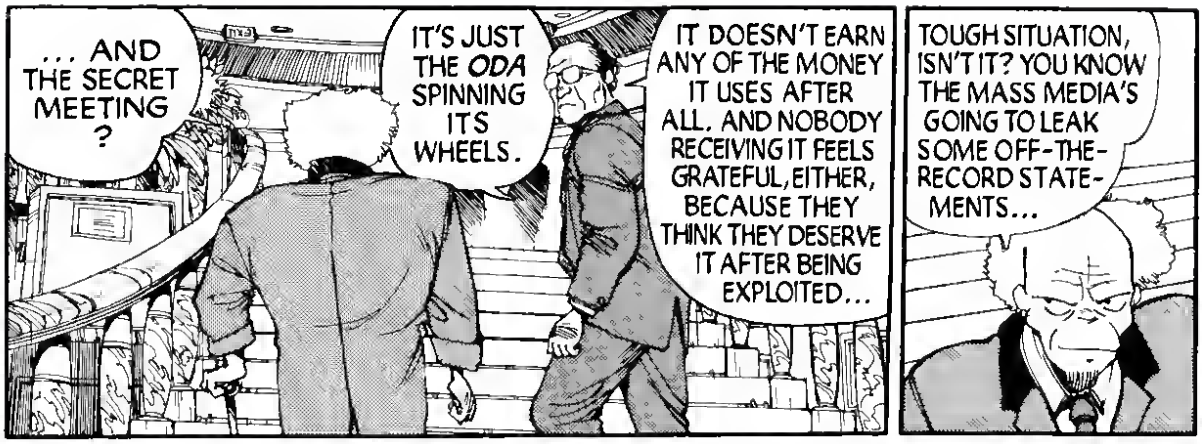
BOTH ECONOMICALLY AND IN TERMS OF OUR FOREIGN POLICY, THEY'RE A TINY, LOW-PRIORITY COUNTRY. USED TO BE A MILITARY GOVERNMENT BUT THEY'VE BEEN FAIRLY DEMOCRATIC SINCE THE REVOLUTION...

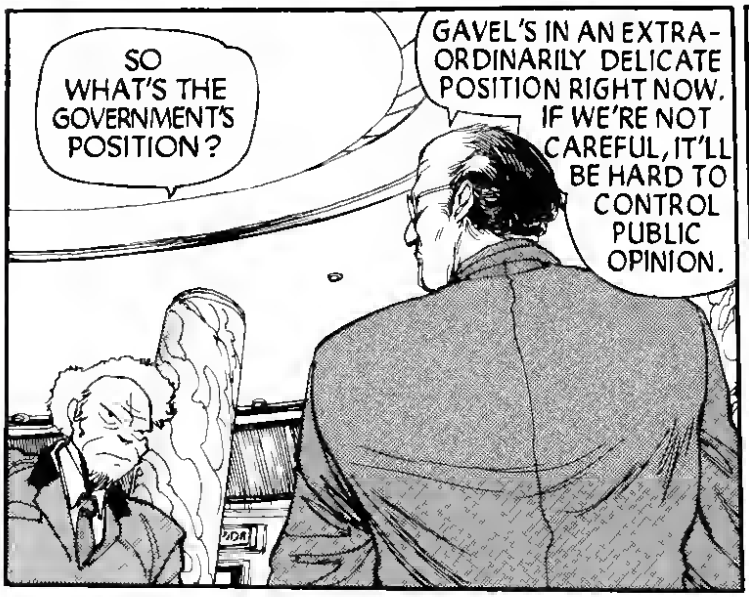
AS I RECALL, ONE OF YOUR MEN WAS IN CHARGE OF TEACHING TACTICS TO THE TROOPS IN THE REVOLUTION...

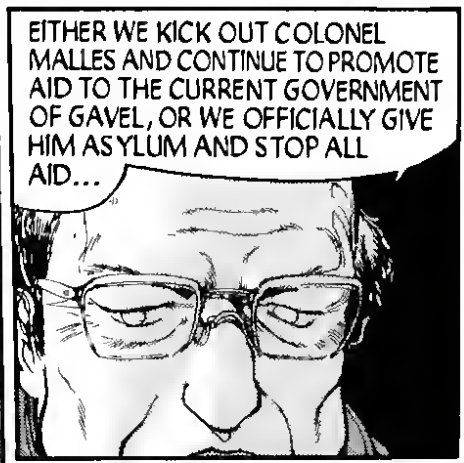
THAT A FACT?

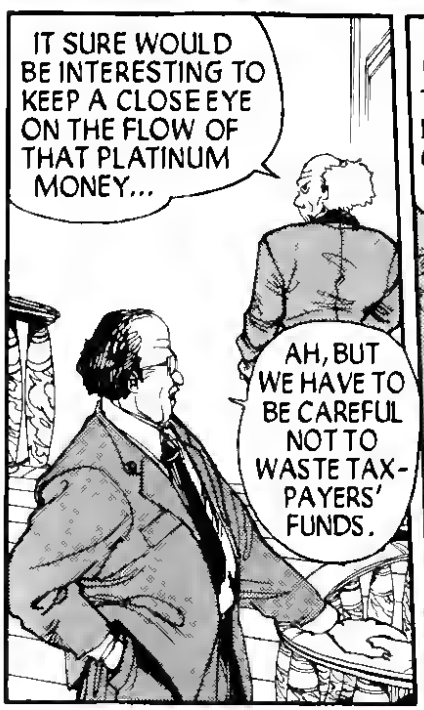
*COLONEL MALLES,* THE BOSS OF THE FORMER MILITARY GOVERNMENT, IS IN OUR COUNTRY NOW, SUPPOSEDLY SEEKING "MEDICAL TREATMENT..."

...BUT HE'S STILL SENDING AID TO THE MILITARY FORCES IN HIS COUNTRY. AS A RESULT, THE FORCES UNDER HIS INFLUENCE STILL CONTROL THE PLATINUM DEPOSITS THERE.


... AND THE SECRET MEETING ?
IT'S JUST THE *ODA* SPINNING ITS WHEELS.
IT DOESN'T EARN ANY OF THE MONEY IT USES AFTER ALL. AND NOBODY RECEIVING IT FEELS GRATEFUL, EITHER, BECAUSE THEY THINK THEY DESERVE IT AFTER BEING EXPLOITED...
TOUGH SITUATION, ISN'T IT? YOU KNOW THE MASS MEDIA'S GOING TO LEAK SOME OFF-THE-RECORD STATEMENTS...

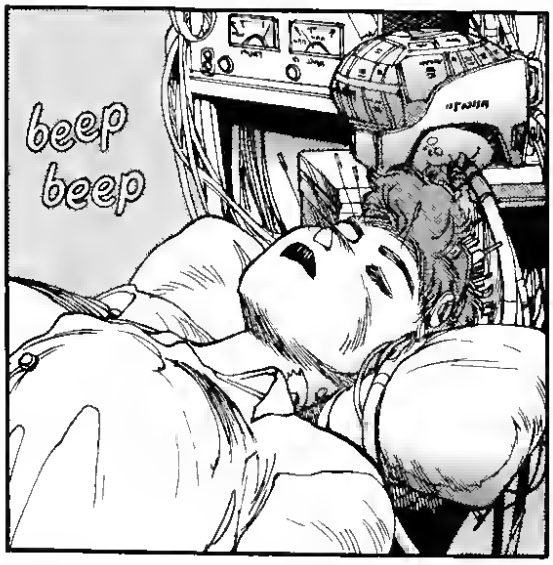

SO WHAT'S THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION?
GAVEL'S IN AN EXTRAORDINARILY DELICATE POSITION RIGHT NOW. IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL, IT'LL BE HARD TO CONTROL PUBLIC OPINION.

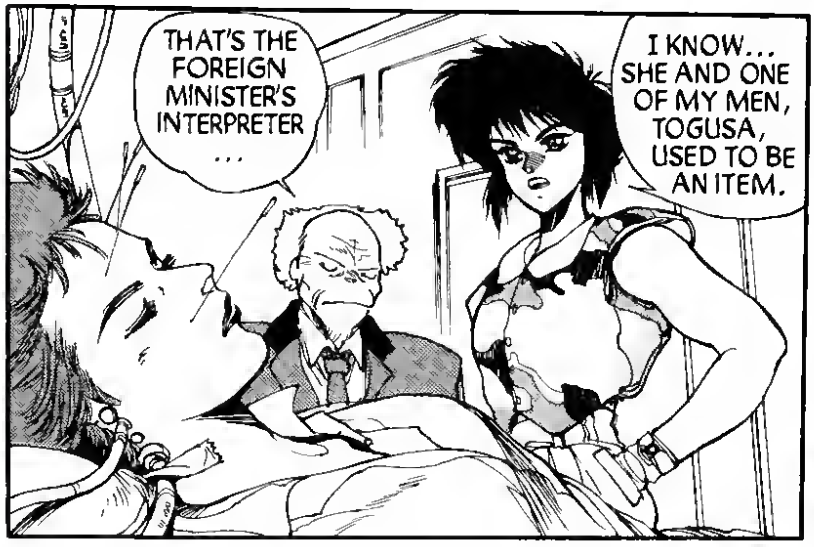

EITHER WE KICK OUT COLONEL MALLES AND CONTINUE TO PROMOTE AID TO THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT OF GAVEL, OR WE OFFICIALLY GIVE HIM ASYLUM AND STOP ALL AID...

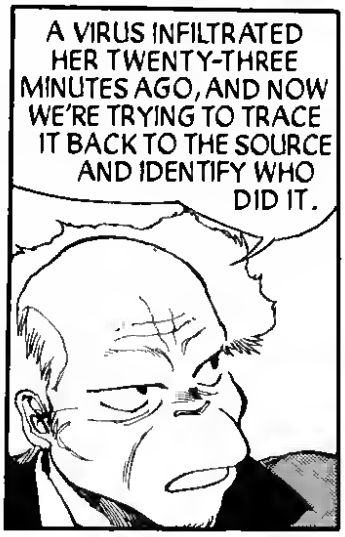

IT SURE WOULD BE INTERESTING TO KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON THE FLOW OF THAT PLATINUM MONEY...
AH, BUT WE HAVE TO BE CAREFUL NOT TO WASTE TAXPAYERS' FUNDS.

HMPH... SOME "REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE," WONDER WHY IT ALWAYS COMES DOWN TO MONEY...?

NOW, THERE *IS* SOMEONE WHO DID GIVE CONSIDERABLE GUIDANCE TO THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT ON TACTICS...



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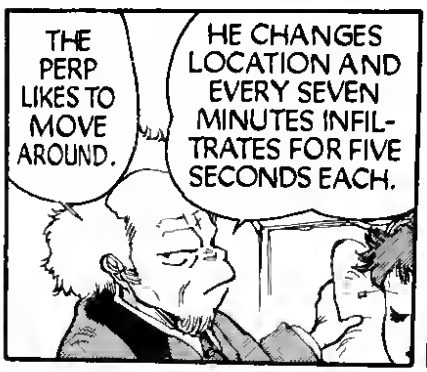
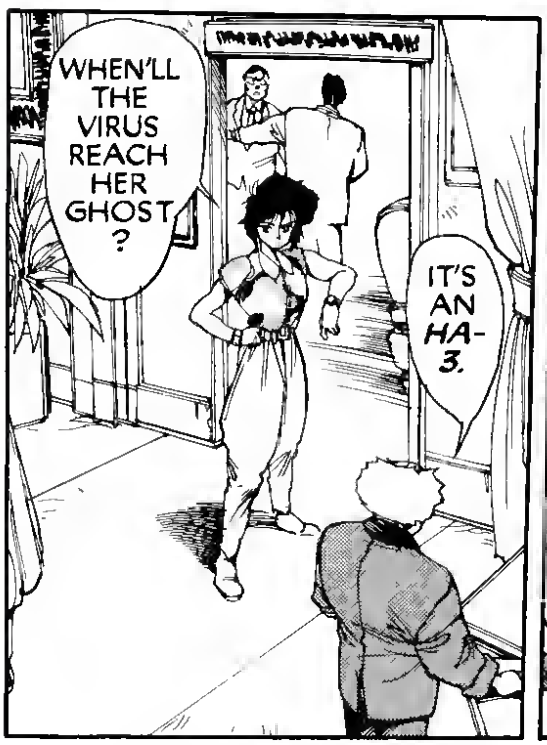
THAT'S AMAZING... HOW WAS IT DISCOVERED THAT A VIRUS HAD BEEN INFILTRATED IN THE FIRST PLACE?!
IT'S A VICTORY FOR INTELLIGENCE... IT SET A NET AND JUST WAITED...

WITH A TRAP SET, AND AFTER TWENTY-THREE MINUTES, IT *STILL* HASN'T GOT THEM?


THE PERP LIKES TO MOVE AROUND.
HE CHANGES LOCATION AND EVERY SEVEN MINUTES INFIL-TRATES FOR FIVE SECONDS EACH.

SO IN OTHER WORDS, SHE'S GOING TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS DANGEROUS GAME FOR US UNTIL WE CATCH WHO DID IT, EH?


WHEN'LL THE VIRUS REACH HER GHOST?
IT'S AN *HA-3.*

HMM... SO A BIT OVER TWO HOURS...

*ISHIKAWA* AND *BOMA* ARE IN A CAR RIGHT NOW, TRYING TO NAIL DOWN THE PERP'S LOCATION. I WANT YOU TO RENDEZVOUS WITH THEM!

YA GOTTA TELL ME, MAJOR... I HEARD THIS FROM MAYUMI, IN SECURITY'S ARMORY, BUT I DON'T BEL--

YOU MEAN THAT SHE'S REALLY SIXTY-TWO YEARS OLD?

WHAT? NO SHIT!

SO IS IT REALLY TRUE SHE CAN HIT A PINHEAD WITH A 3.5" BARREL SEBURO™ *SNAB* AT 25 YARDS, FIRING TWELVE ROUNDS IN THREE SECONDS?

HEY, TOGUSA, *EVERYONE* CAN DO THAT... EXCEPT YOU AND SAITO...

AW, C'MON... DON'T PICK ON ME, MAJOR.

WITH HUMAN SILHOUETTES SHE USUALLY HITS THE MARK AT 100 YARDS.

SNABS ARE REALLY DESIGNED TO BE USED AGAINST THE ENEMY AT UNDER FIVE YARDS, BUT THERE'S NOTHING *THAT* SPECIAL ABOUT WHAT SHE CAN DO...

BUT I'VE NEVER EVEN SEEN ANYONE DO THAT AT THE SHOOTING RANGE! 'COURSE, I'M NOT SPECIAL "A" RANK MYSELF...

WHAT WE *REALLY* NEED, TOGUSA, IS NOT SHARPSHOOTING SKILLS, SO MUCH AS THE ABILITY TO GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO MAKE *SURE* THE ENEMY CAN BE KILLED.

IF YOU WANT TO PLAY AT LONG-RANGE SNIPING, YOU CAN ALWAYS GO SHOOT AN ELEPHANT AT 500 MILES WITH A MINIATURE CRUISE MISSILE...

BY THE WAY, WHY ARE YOU USING A REVOLVER FOR YOUR MAIN GUN?

CHAK

IN A TWO-MAN CELL, AREN'T YOU AFRAID OF IT JAMMING, EVEN IF YOU'RE CARRYING TWO GUNS?

I HAPPEN TO *LIKE* THE *M2007*!

SEBURO™ *C-25*- THINK OF IT AS AN *FN P90* WITH A LOWER MAGAZINE!

WELL, AS THE ONE BEING BACKED-UP, I'M MORE INTERESTED IN BEING PROTECTED THAN IN WHAT GUN YOU LIKE BEST...

I'M THE ONE IN THE LINE OF FIRE, AFTER ALL. DO ME A FAVOR, TOGUSA, AND CARRY A 20-SHOT, 5MM SEBURO™...

YEAH, YEAH...

SHIT.

AND WHAT THE HELL'S THIS? THIS *AS-II* SHOTGUN'S GOT A SHORT RANGE AND CAN'T EVEN PENETRATE A CAR DOOR! WHAT GOOD IS IT? DON'T EXPECT IT TO HAVE ANY PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT ON A PRO, AND FOR ANYTHING OVER 30 YARDS YOU NEED AN ASSAULT RIFLE ANYWAY...

HEY, IT'LL GO THROUGH A MERCEDES DOOR--I'VE GOT IT FILLED WITH SLUGS.

AND IN-DOORS I CAN USE IT TO BLAST A HOLE IN WALLS...

SURE YOU'RE NOT CONFUSING HUNTING HUMANS WITH MAKING MINCE-MEAT?

FOR CLOSE-RANGE WORK AND PIERCING POWER USE THE SEBURO™, FOR WALLS AND DISTANCE USE A RIFLE!

STILL, I REALLY THINK I COULD USE IT...

WELL, THIS TIME YOU WON'T NEED IT.

WE'RE TRACING THE HACKER THAT INFILTRATED THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S INTERPRETER.

HIS INTERPRETER?!

YOU MEAN--!!!?

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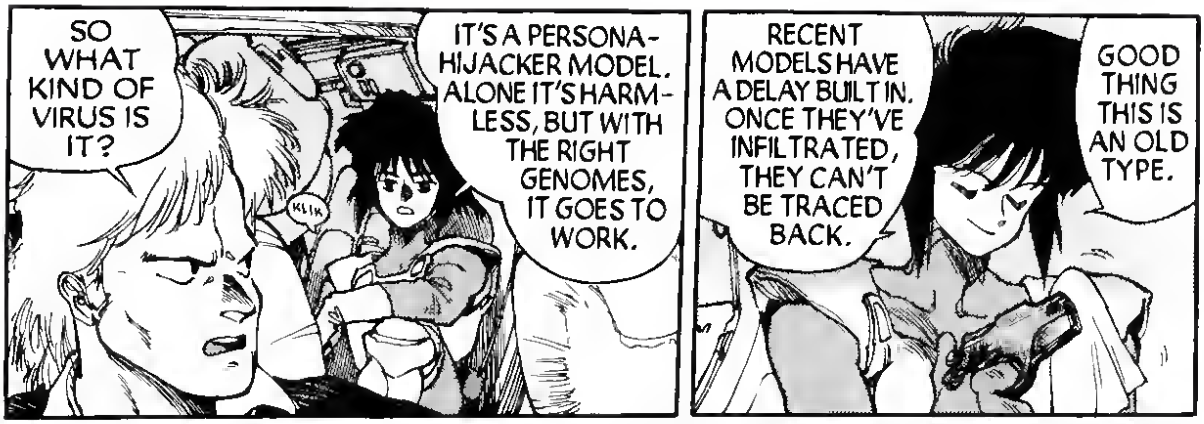
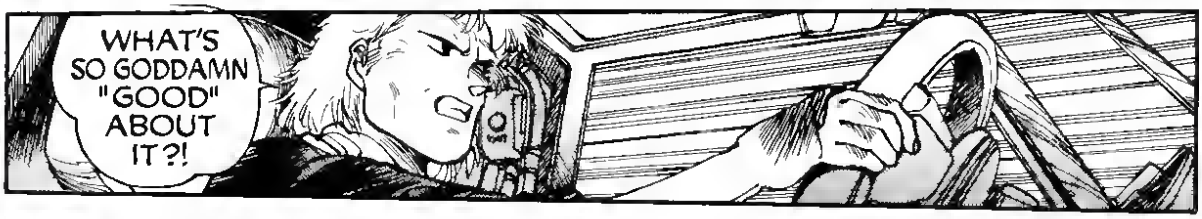
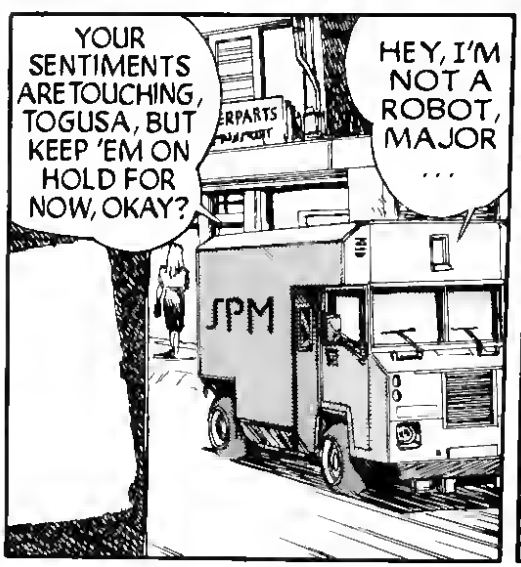
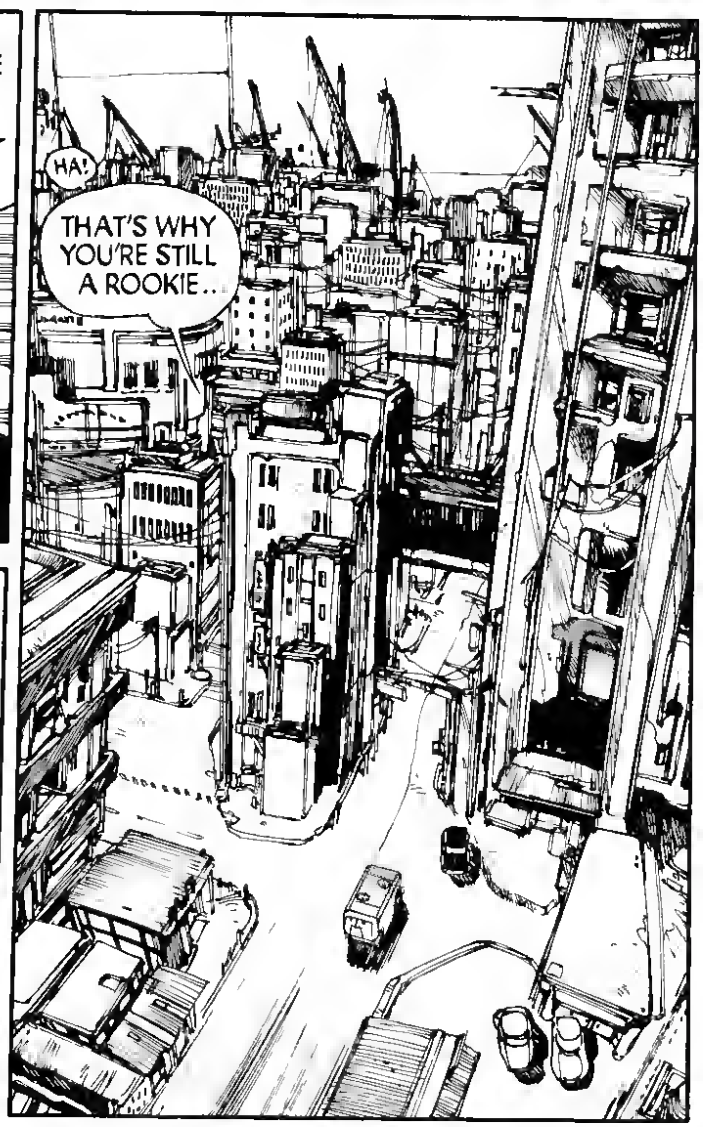
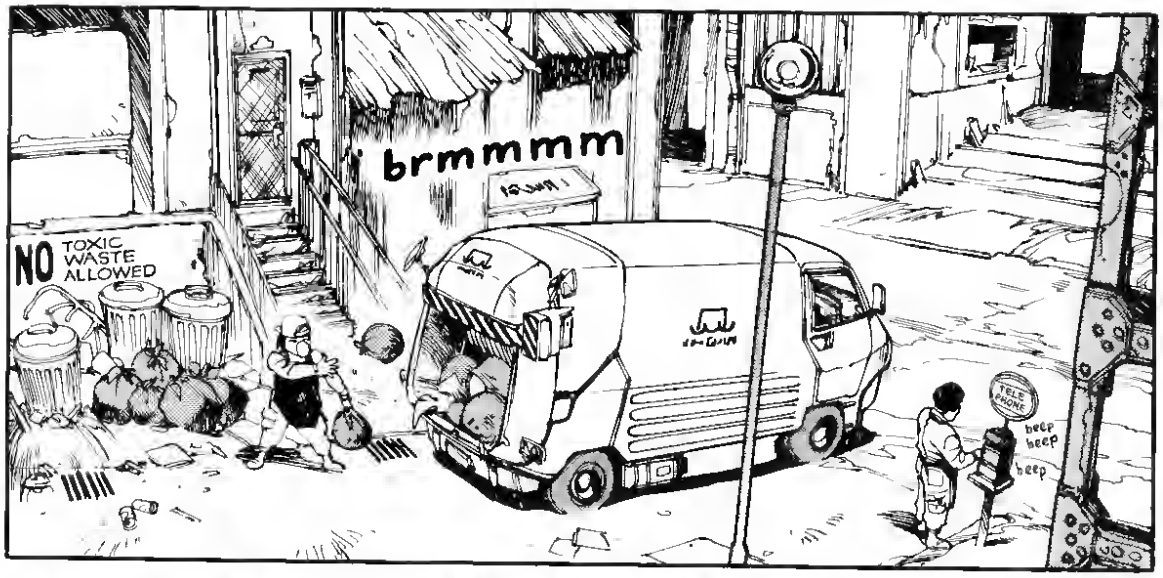


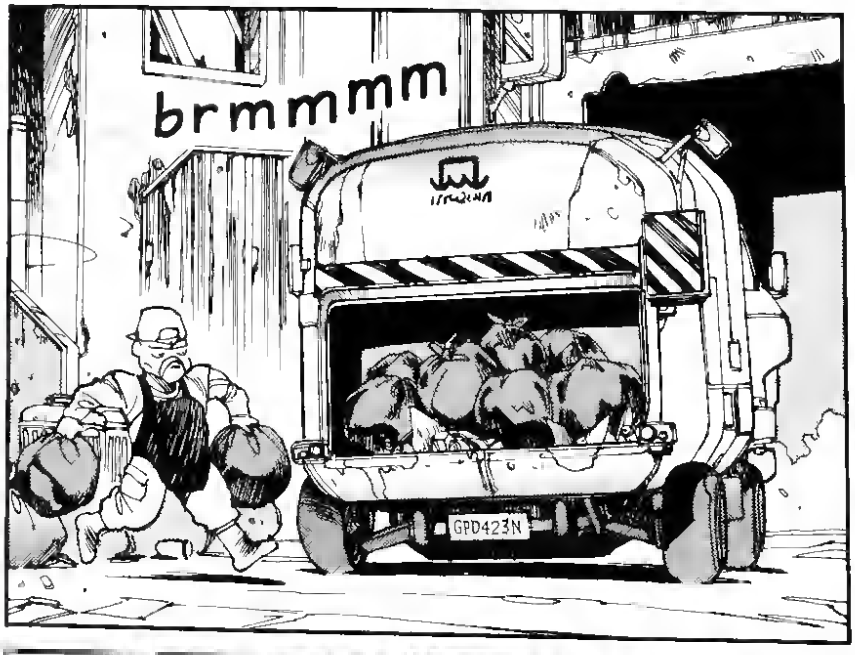



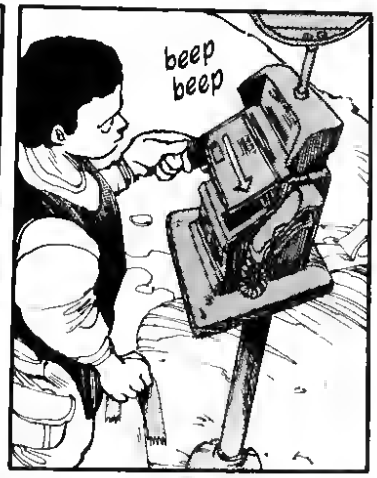



After this, there's a scene where Mokoto takes over the driving and Togusa checks his gear and puts it on, but it was too much of a hassle to draw so I left it out.



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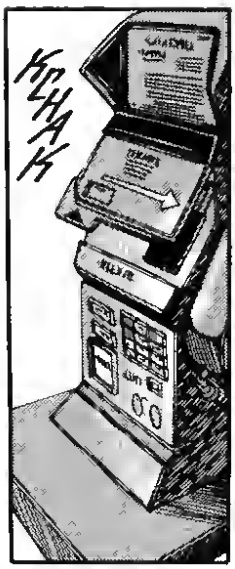

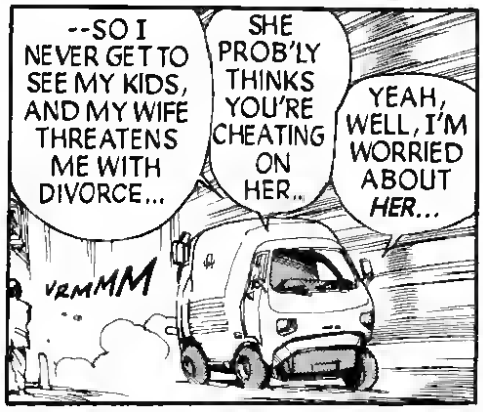


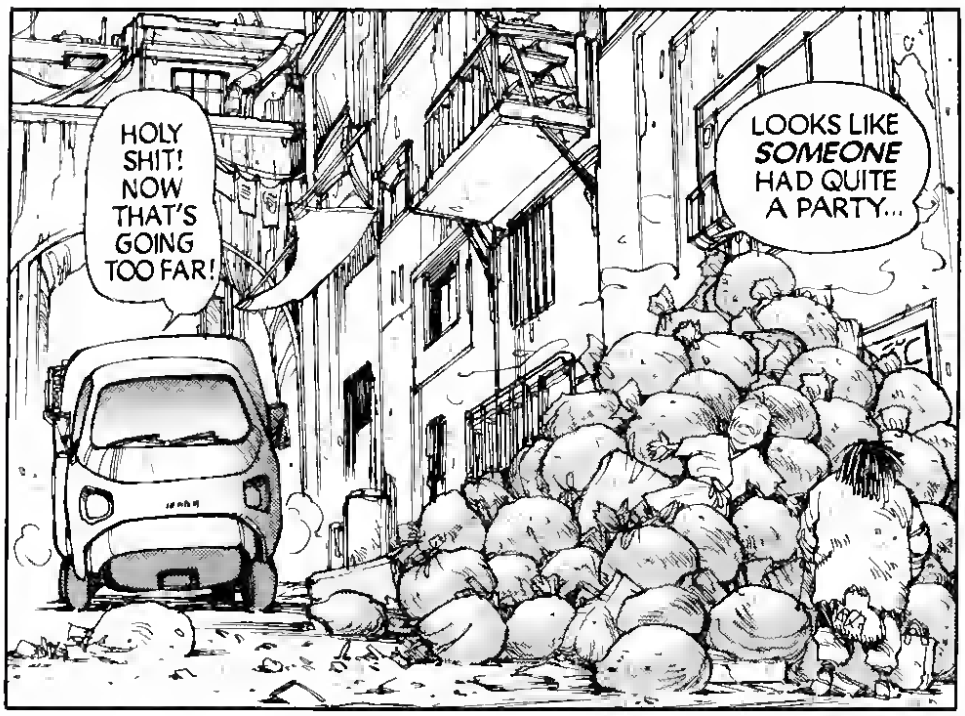

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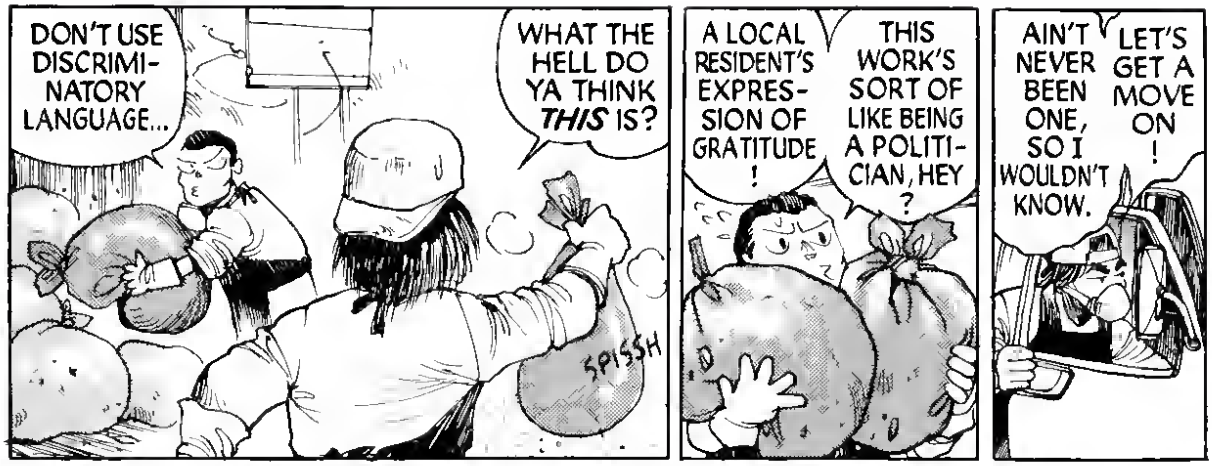
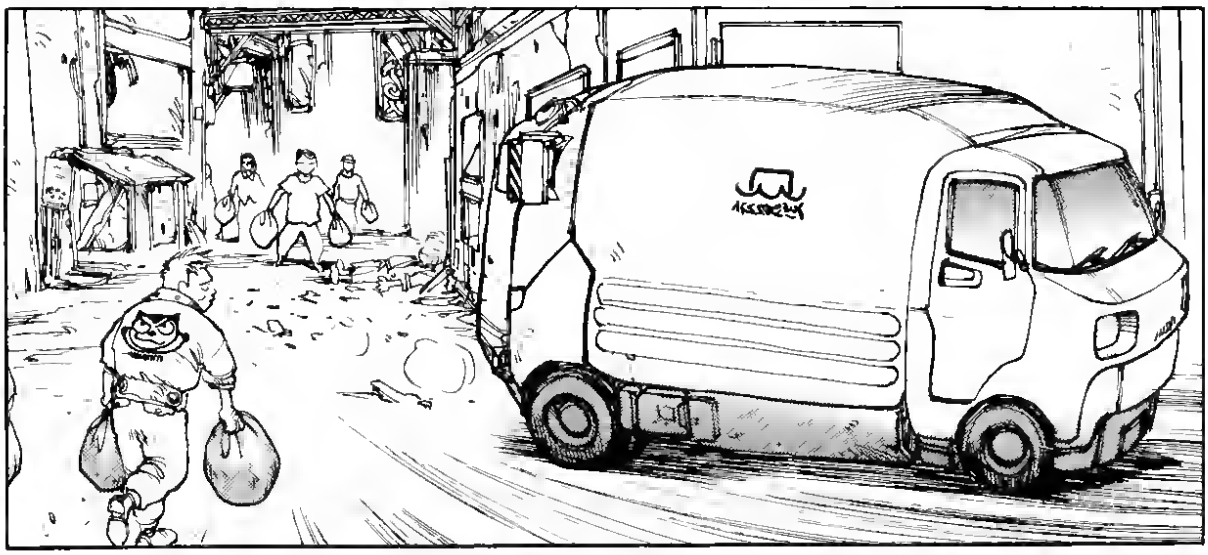
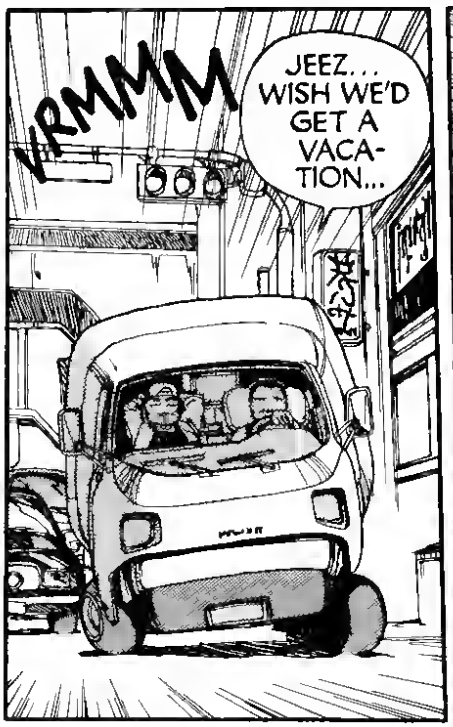
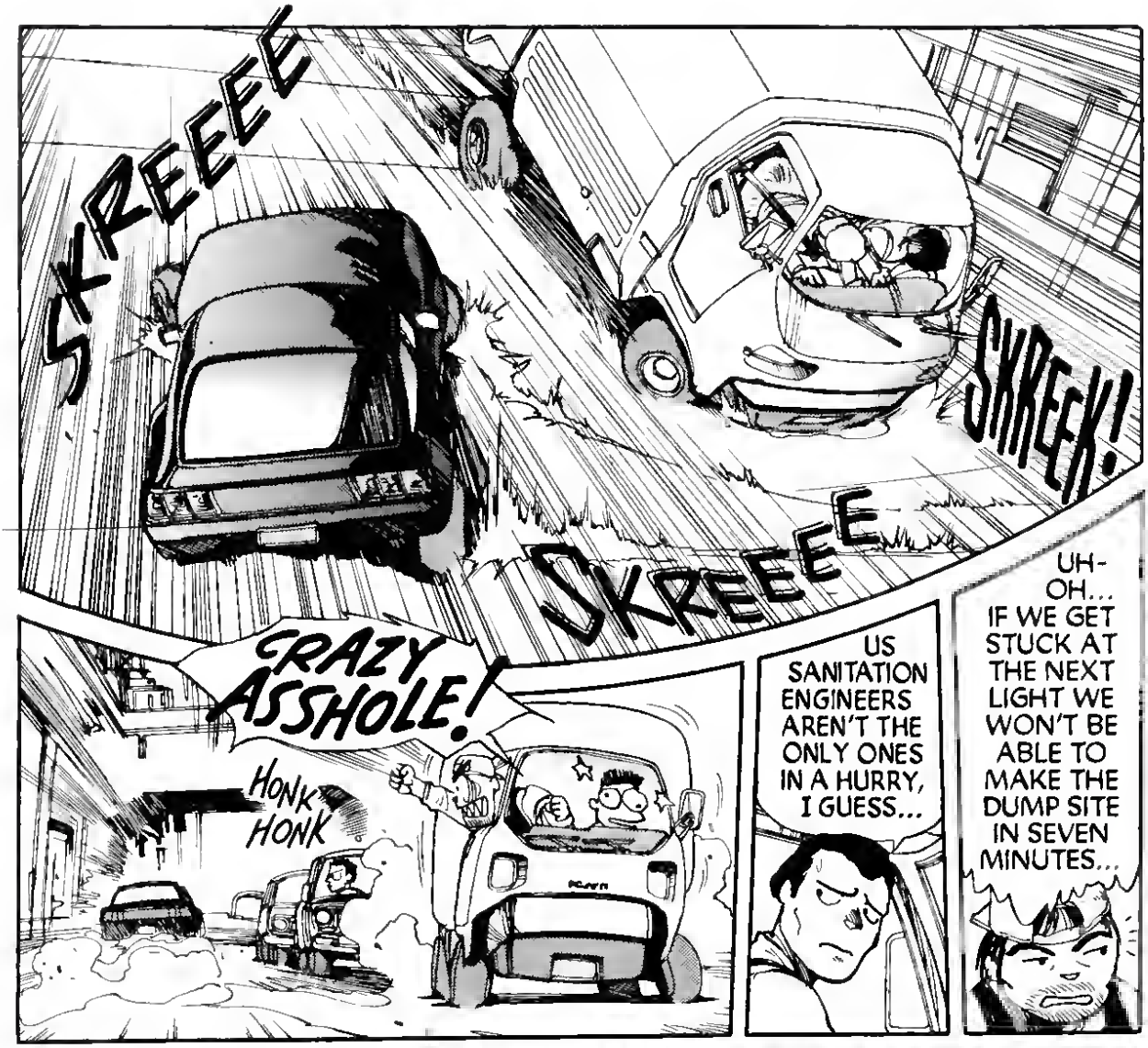
HELLO? POLICE? WE'VE GOT ANOTHER SENIOR CITIZEN ABANDONED ON A TRASH PILE. WE'RE PICKING UP THE GARBAGE AROUND HIM...
SURE ARE A LOT OF JUNGLE CROWS AROUND...
ATTENTION, OH HONORABLE "JOB-CHALLENGED" ONES-- STAND BACK, WE'RE GONNA USE A LITTLE ANTI-CROW GAS...
SHAKK
SHAKKA
CAW CAW CAW CAW
HOLY SHIT!
FWOO
OOOSH
OUCH! DAMN IDIOTS EVEN PUT BROKEN GLASS IN PLASTIC BAGS!
SKRASSH
CAW!
THAT'S WEIRD... THIS HYPO'S GOT "FOR USE BY PATHOLOGY DEPARTMENT ONLY" WRITTEN ON IT...
IF ONLY WE COULD GET OUR BOSSES TO BUY US ARMORED SUITS... WE OUGHTA GO ON STRIKE LIKE WORKERS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES DO...
I WAS BETTER OFF WHEN I WAS WORKING AT THE SACRED CITIZEN'S RELIEF CENTER...
SIGHHHH
OH, YE POOR PROLETARIAT-- STOP STANDING THERE LIKE A BUSTED ROBOT AND GET YOUR ASS IN GEAR!


DON'T USE DISCRIMINATORY LANGUAGE...
WHAT THE HELL DO YA THINK *THIS* IS?
SPISSH
A LOCAL RESIDENT'S EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE!
THIS WORK'S SORT OF LIKE BEING A POLITICIAN, HEY?
AIN'T NEVER BEEN ONE, SO I WOULDN'T KNOW.
LET'S GET A MOVE ON!

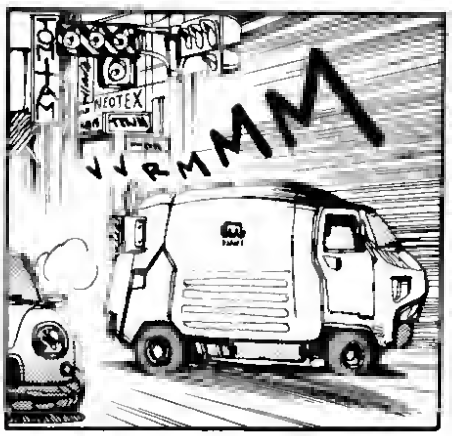


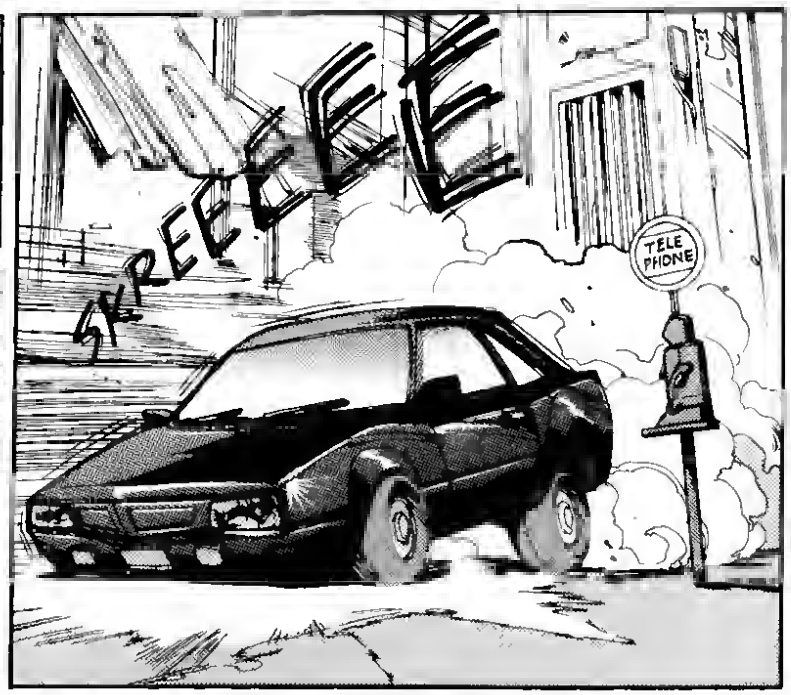

VRMMM
JEEZ... WISH WE'D GET A VACATION...

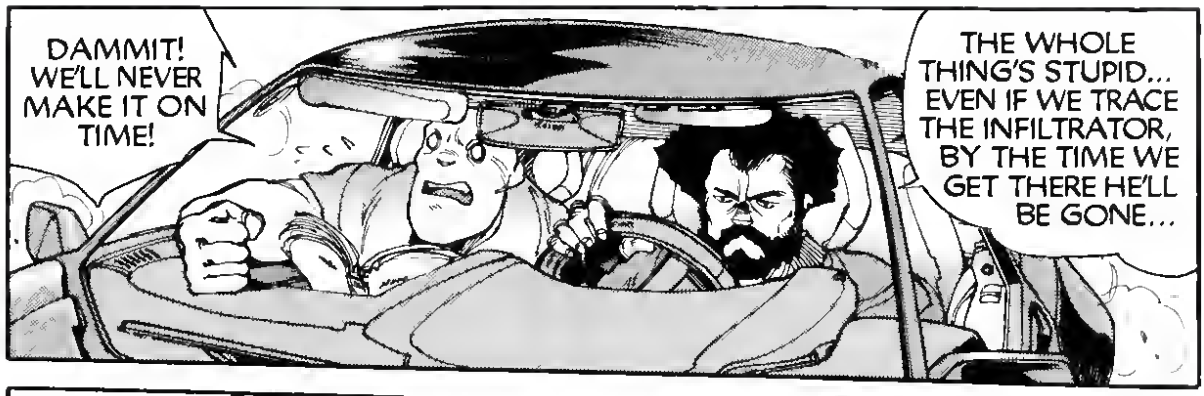
AA!
SKREEE
VRMMM


SKREEEE
SKREEEE
SKREEK!
CRAZY ASSHOLE!
HONK HONK
US SANITATION ENGINEERS AREN'T THE ONLY ONES IN A HURRY, I GUESS...
UH-OH... IF WE GET STUCK AT THE NEXT LIGHT WE WON'T BE ABLE TO MAKE THE DUMP SITE IN SEVEN MINUTES...

STEP ON IT!
VRMM

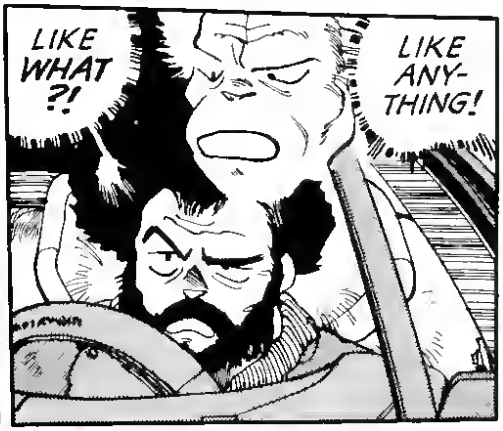

NEOTEX
VVRMMM

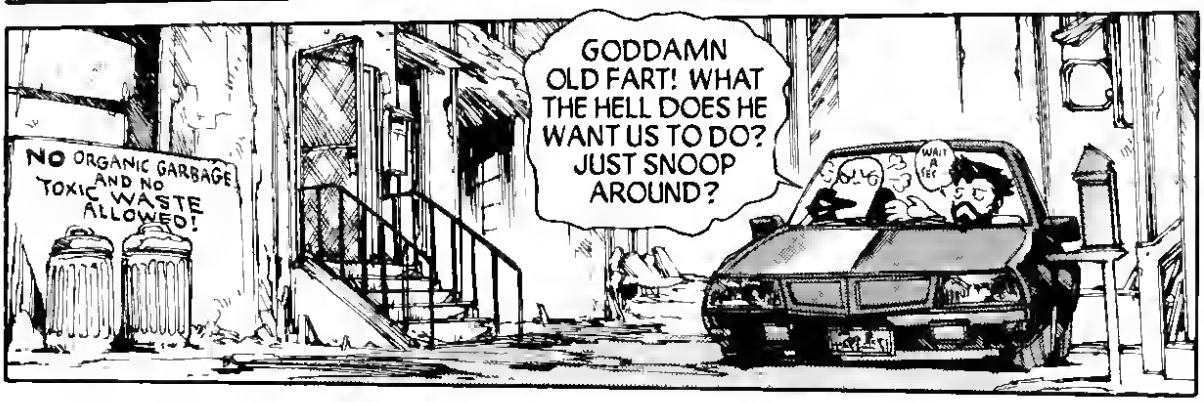

SKREEEE
TELE PHONE

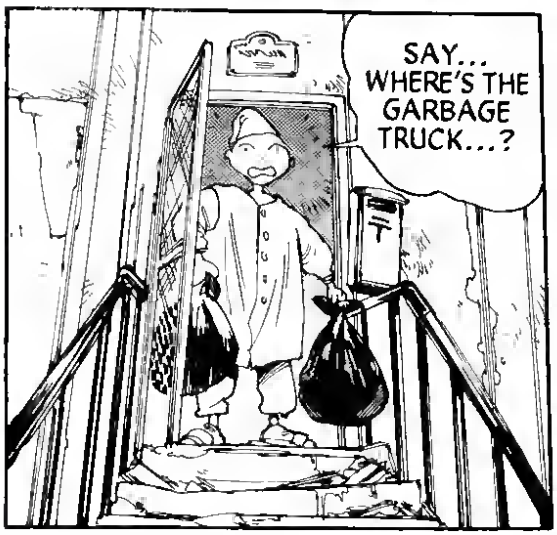

DAMMIT! WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT ON TIME!
THE WHOLE THING'S STUPID... EVEN IF WE TRACE THE INFILTRATOR, BY THE TIME WE GET THERE HE'LL BE GONE...

TOO MUCH BITCHING'LL NEGATIVELY IMPACT YOUR EVAL AND BONUS, BOYS!
BUT CHIEF, WHY DON'T YOU JUST FRY HIM WITH AN ATTACK BARRIER?!

MAJOR KUSANAGI'S HEADED FOR THE NEXT LOCATION. I WANT YOU BOYS TO LOOK FOR SOMETHING...


LIKE WHAT?!
LIKE ANYTHING!


NO ORGANIC GARBAGE AND NO TOXIC WASTE ALLOWED!
GODDAMN OLD FART! WHAT THE HELL DOES HE WANT US TO DO? JUST SNOOP AROUND?
WAIT A SEC


SAY... WHERE'S THE GARBAGE TRUCK...?

HEY, POPS! YOU SEE ONE O'THEM SANITATION VEHICLES AROUND HERE?
YOU FOLKS FROM THE GARBAGE DEPARTMENT?

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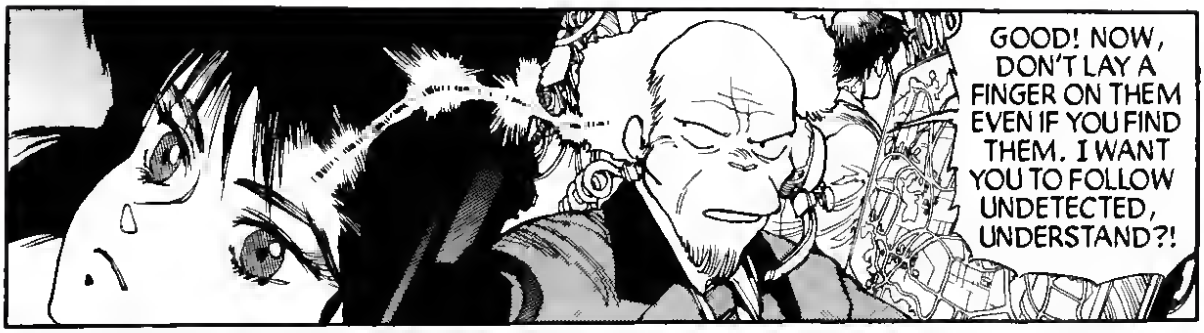
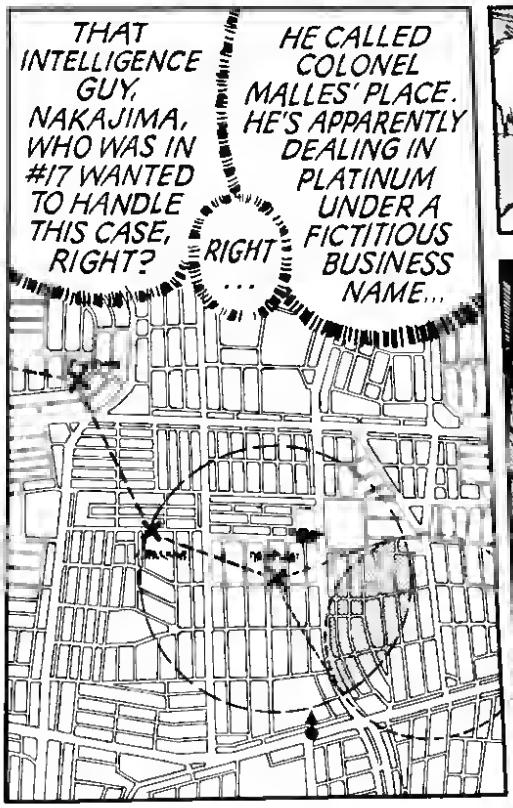
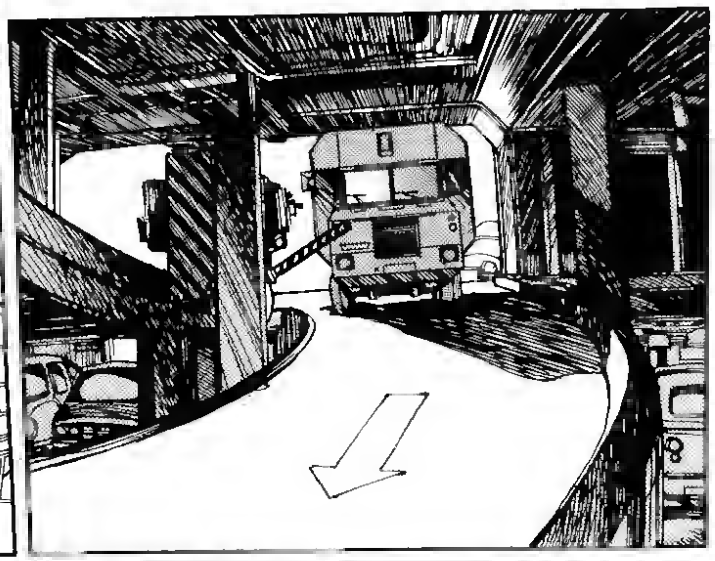
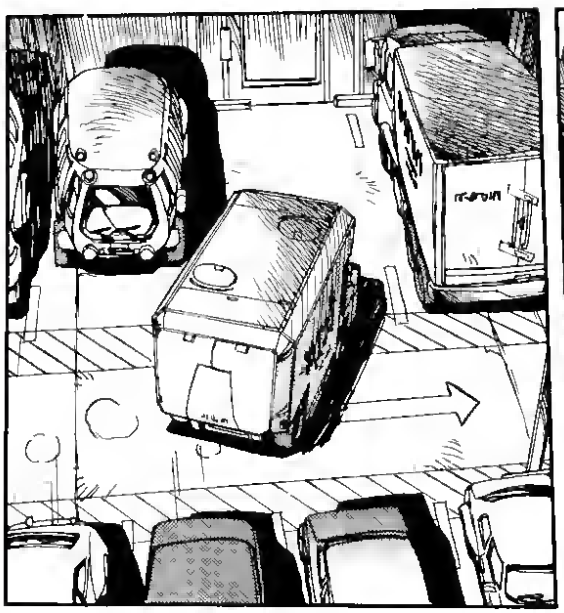
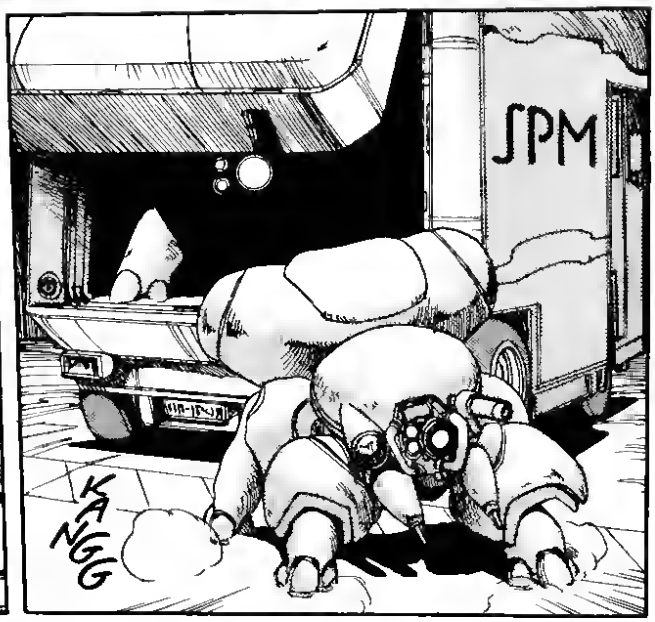

GOOD! NOW, DON'T LAY A FINGER ON THEM EVEN IF YOU FIND THEM. I WANT YOU TO FOLLOW UNDETECTED, UNDERSTAND?!

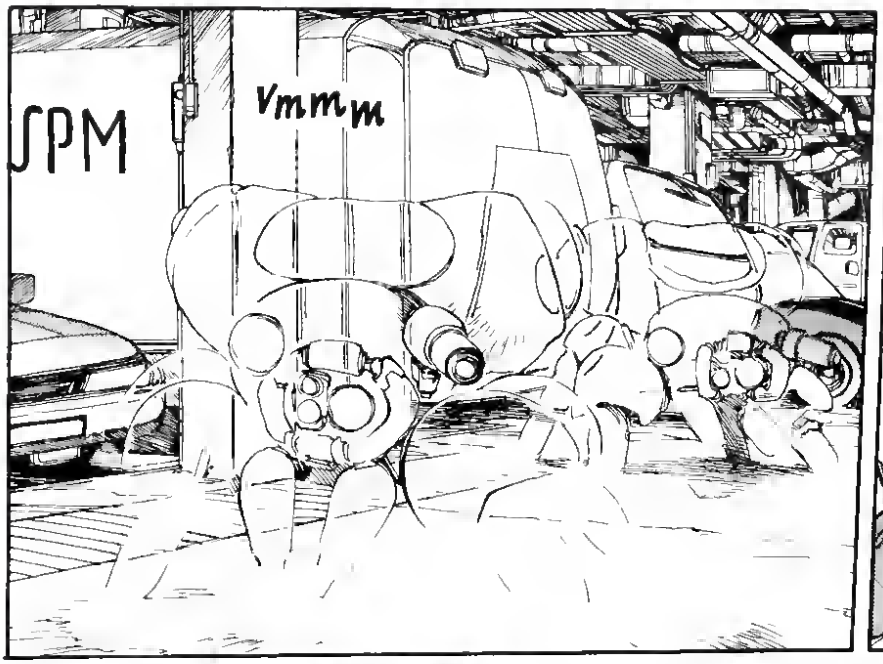

THAT INTELLIGENCE GUY, NAKAJIMA, WHO WAS IN #17 WANTED TO HANDLE THIS CASE, RIGHT?
RIGHT ...
HE CALLED COLONEL MALLES' PLACE. HE'S APPARENTLY DEALING IN PLATINUM UNDER A FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME...

HOW'S THE INTER-PRETER DOING?
SHE'S MAINTAIN-ING... DON'T LET ANYONE KNOW WHAT WE'RE DOING.






SPM
KANGG

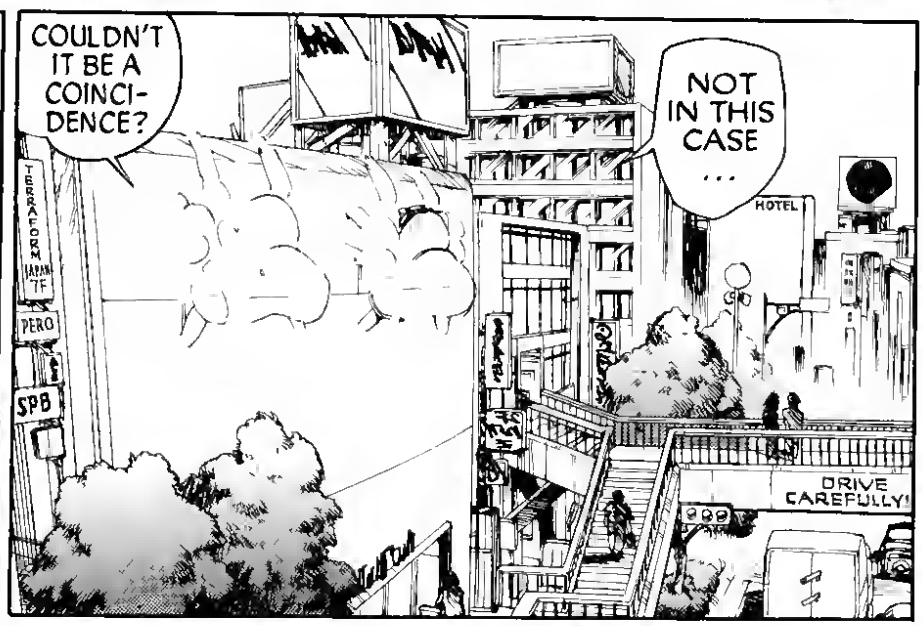

SPM
Vmmm

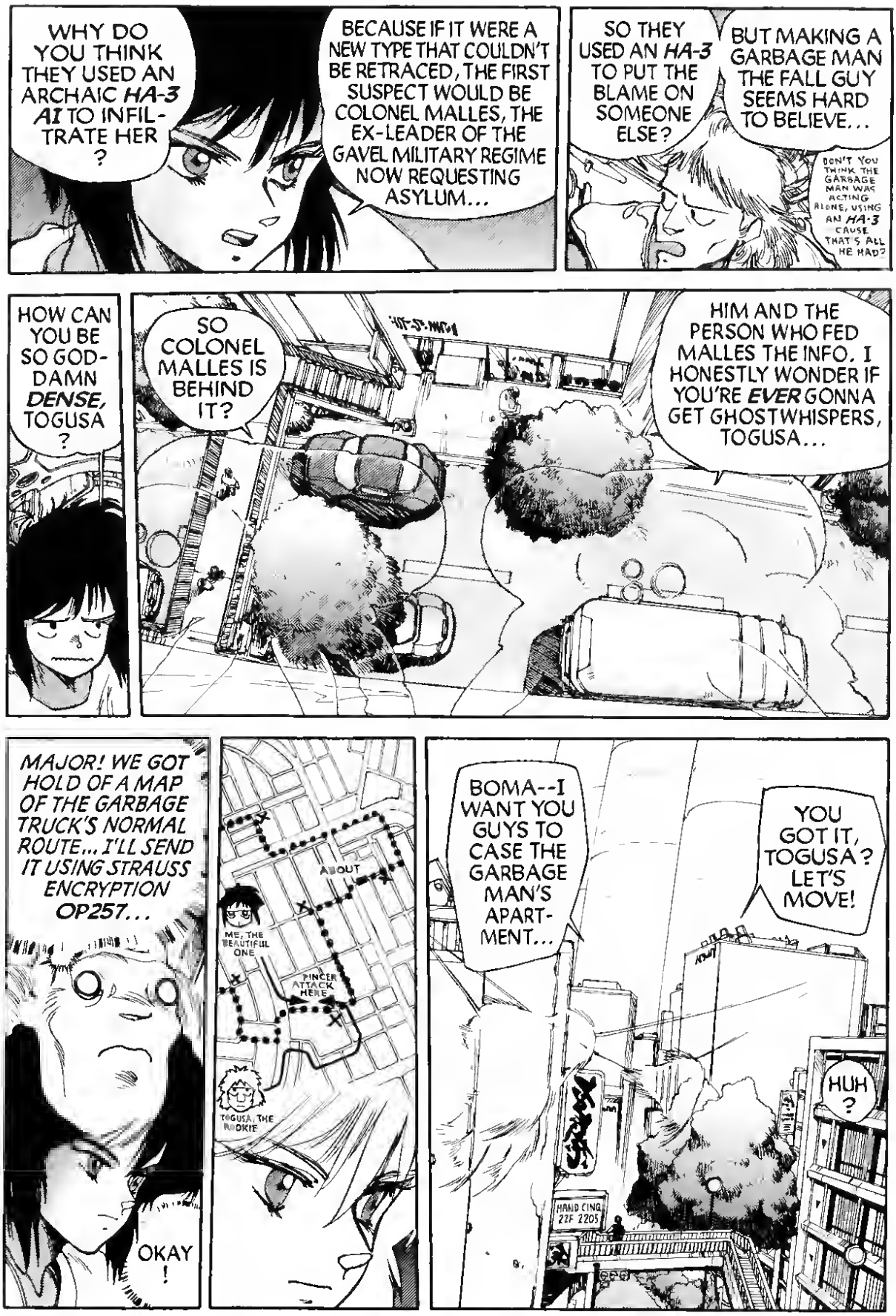
AREN'T YOU OVER-DOING THIS A BIT?
YOU WANNA PULL A HALF-ASSED OP?

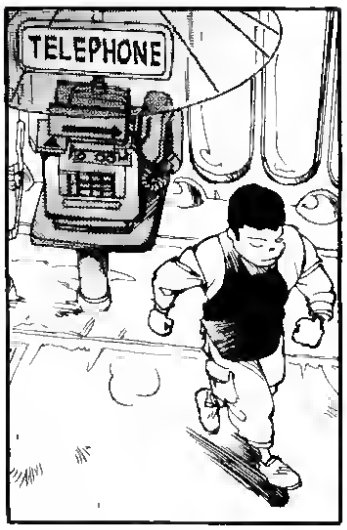
HEY, THIS MAY BE SOME GARBAGE MAN'S IDEA OF A PRANK...

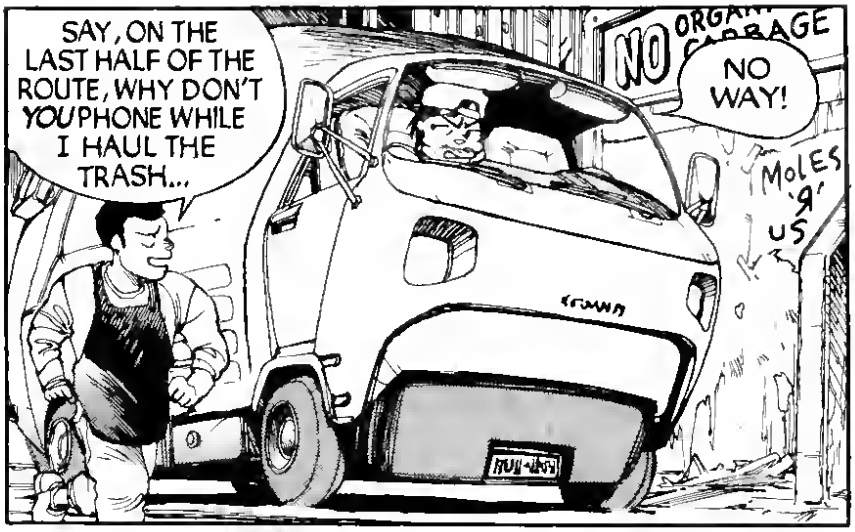
GIVE ME A BREAK, TOGUSA!
SKSHHH
CLEARANCE = 3.2M
30m ¥20
1 HOUR ¥50
JEEZ, STOP PICKIN' ON ME, MAJOR!

WHAT THEY WERE TRYING TO DO MIGHT NOT HAVE WORKED, BUT IF THE HA-3 WOUND UP CONTROLLING HER, SHE'D PROBABLY HAVE BEEN USED TO KILL THE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE GAVEL REPUBLIC AT THE SECRET MEETING...

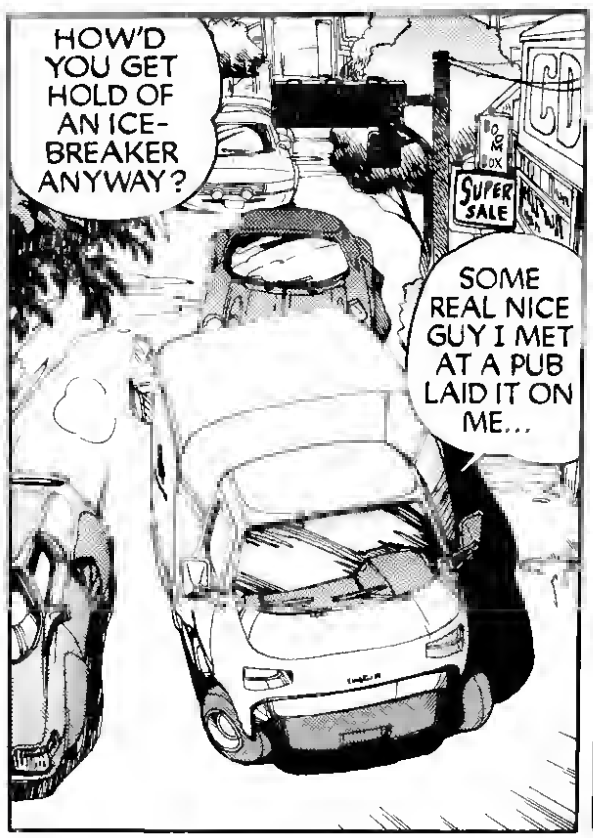

COULDN'T IT BE A COINCIDENCE?
NOT IN THIS CASE ...
TERRAFORM
PERO
SPB
HOTEL
DRIVE CAREFULLY!


WHY DO YOU THINK THEY USED AN ARCHAIC HA-3 AI TO INFILTRATE HER ?
BECAUSE IF IT WERE A NEW TYPE THAT COULDN'T BE RETRACED, THE FIRST SUSPECT WOULD BE COLONEL MALLES, THE EX-LEADER OF THE GAVEL MILITARY REGIME NOW REQUESTING ASYLUM...
SO THEY USED AN HA-3 TO PUT THE BLAME ON SOMEONE ELSE?
BUT MAKING A GARBAGE MAN THE FALL GUY SEEMS HARD TO BELIEVE...
DON'T YOU THINK THE GARBAGE MAN WAS ACTING ALONE, USING AN HA-3 CAUSE THAT'S ALL HE HAD?
HOW CAN YOU BE SO GOD-DAMN DENSE, TOGUSA ?
SO COLONEL MALLES IS BEHIND IT?
HIM AND THE PERSON WHO FED MALLES THE INFO. I HONESTLY WONDER IF YOU'RE EVER GONNA GET GHOSTWHISPERS, TOGUSA...
MAJOR! WE GOT HOLD OF A MAP OF THE GARBAGE TRUCK'S NORMAL ROUTE... I'LL SEND IT USING STRAUSS ENCRYPTION OP257...
OKAY !
ABOUT
ME, THE BEAUTIFUL ONE
PINCER ATTACK HERE
TOGUSA, THE ROOKIE
BOMA--I WANT YOU GUYS TO CASE THE GARBAGE MAN'S APARTMENT...
YOU GOT IT, TOGUSA? LET'S MOVE!
HUH ?
HANDLING 22F 2205


TELEPHONE


SAY, ON THE LAST HALF OF THE ROUTE, WHY DON'T *YOU* PHONE WHILE I HAUL THE TRASH...
NO WAY!
MOLES 'R' US

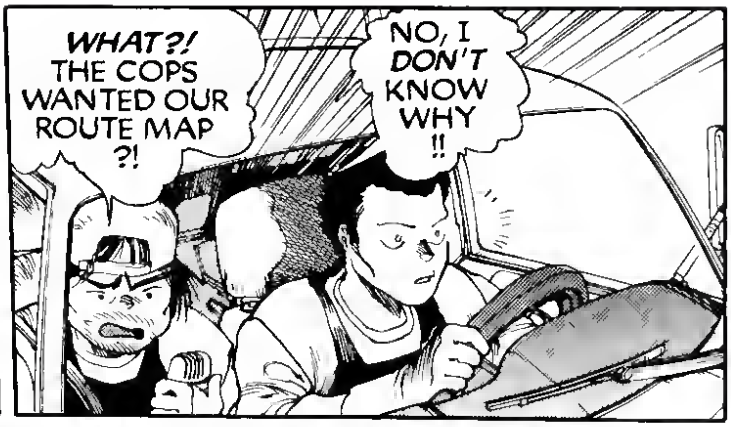
CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE WILLIN' TO DO A GHOST HACK JUST TO FIND OUT WHAT YOUR WIFE'S THINKING...
HOW'D YOU FEEL IF YER WIFE SPRUNG A DIVORCE NOTICE ON YOU?
PROBABLY DO THE SAME THING AS ME, HEY?
BAM


HOW'D YOU GET HOLD OF AN ICE-BREAKER ANYWAY?
SUPER SALE
SOME REAL NICE GUY I MET AT A PUB LAID IT ON ME...

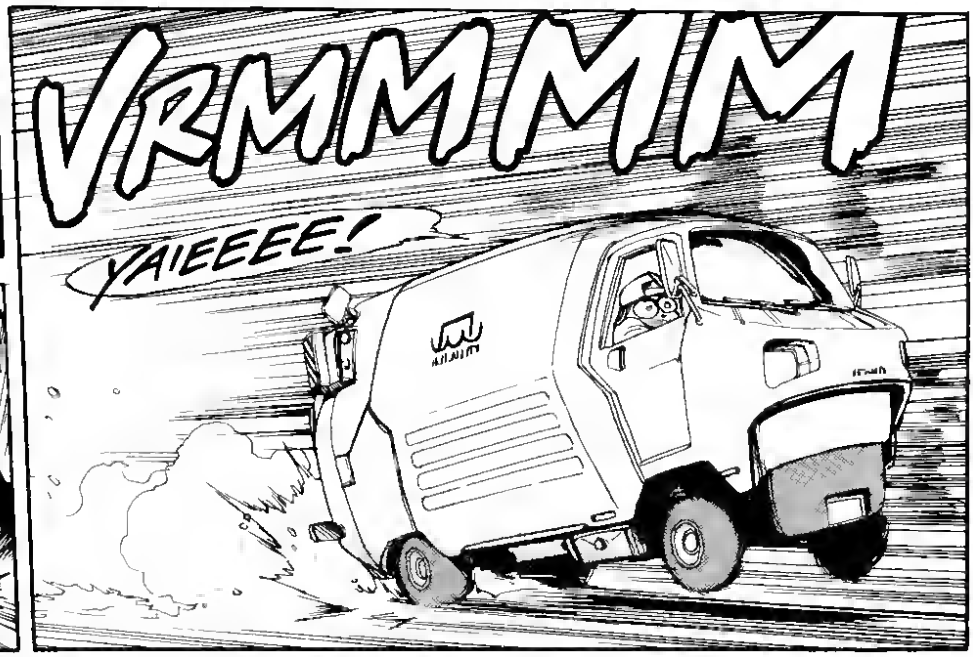
HE KNOWS I'M REAL BUSY, SO HE LEAVES THE BREAKER FOR ME ALONG THE ROUTE...

I STILL THINK IT'S STUPID...
HEY, SHE'S GOT A REALLY GOOD LAWYER AND I CAN'T EVEN GET NEAR HER ANY OTHER WAY.
BEEEP!

TRUCK #1205, OVER...
THAT YOU, BOSS ?!

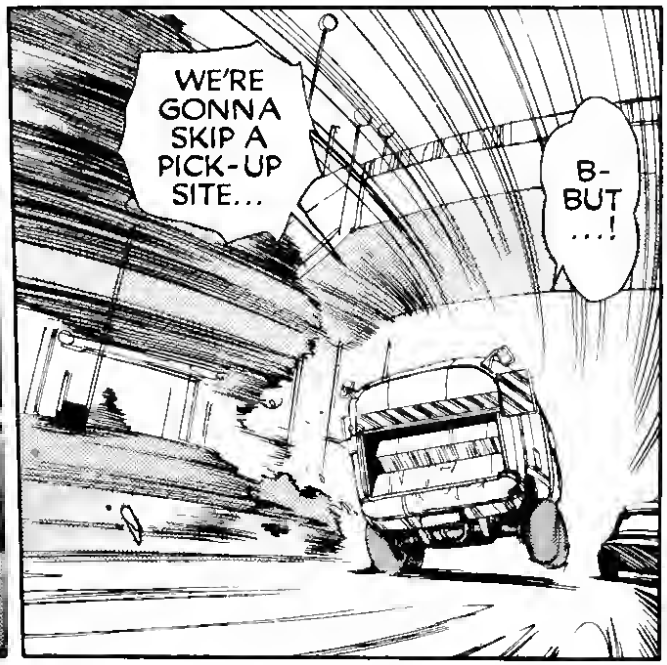

WHAT?! THE COPS WANTED OUR ROUTE MAP ?!
NO, I DON'T KNOW WHY !!

SKREEE

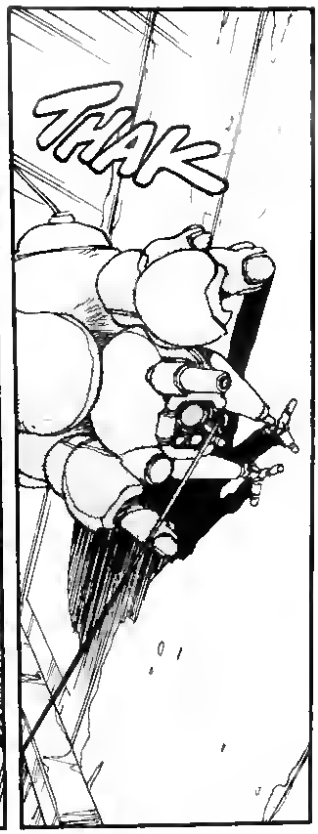

VRMMMM
YAIEEEE!

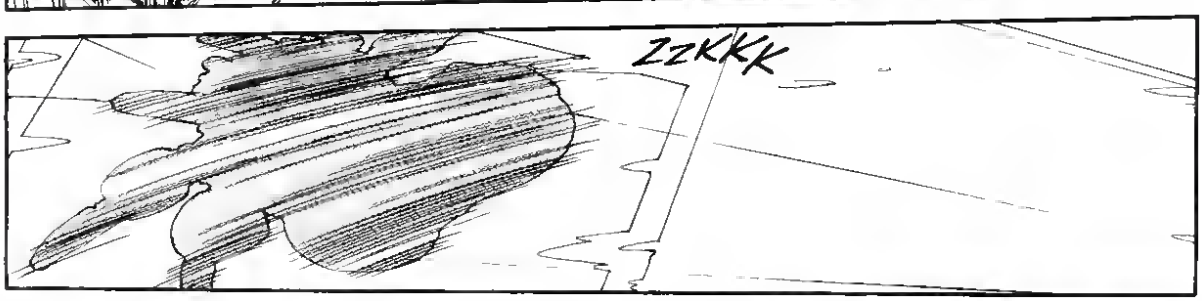
SHITSHIT SHIT! THEY UNCOVERED MY GHOST HACK!

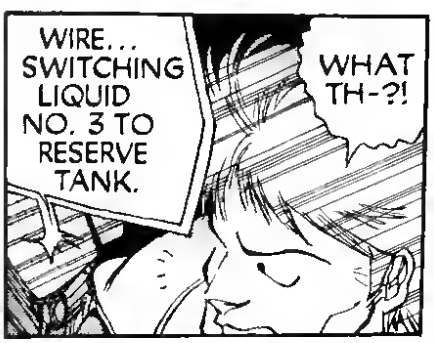
S-S-S-S... SLOW D-D-DOWN...
I GOTTA LET MY PAL WHO GAVE ME THE ICEBREAKER KNOW...


WE'RE GONNA SKIP A PICK-UP SITE...
B-BUT ...!

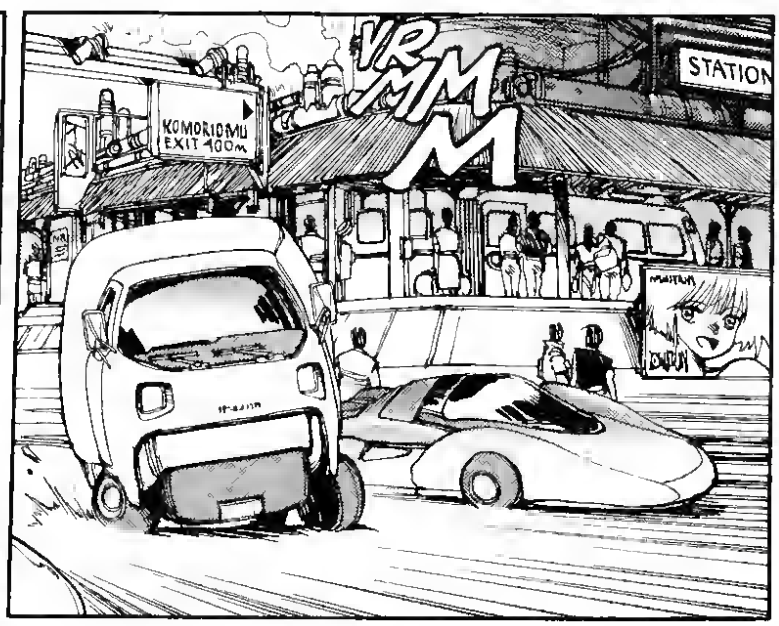
whsshhhh
2F CLINIC


THAK


ZZKKK

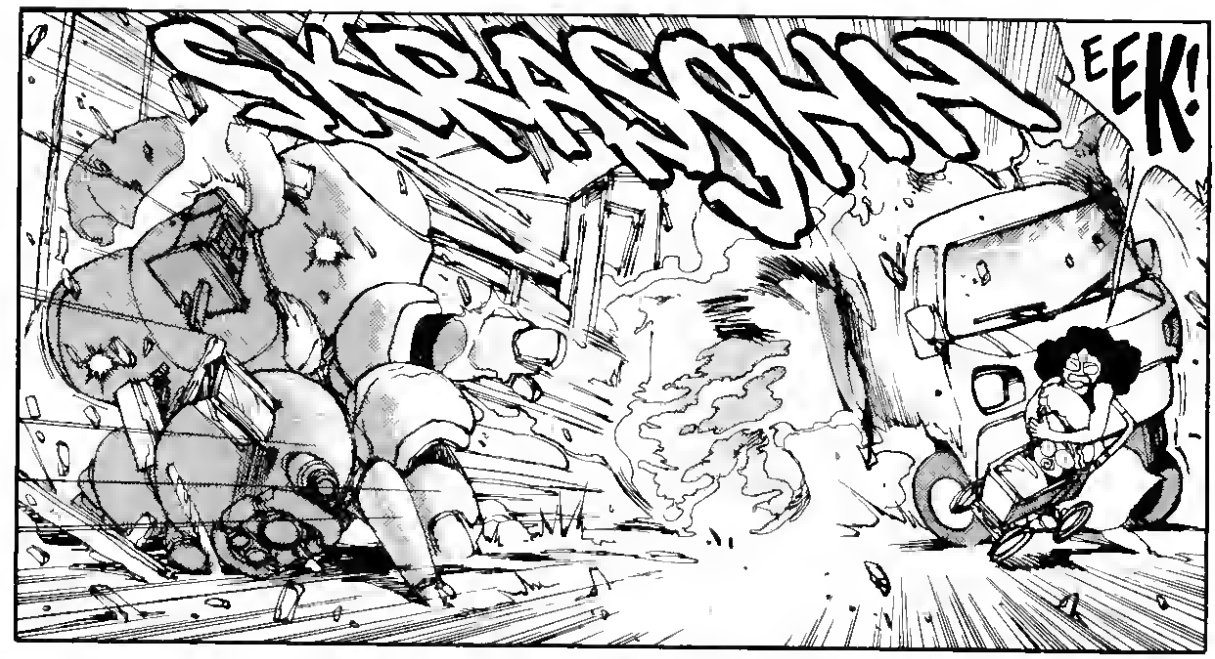

WIRE... SWITCHING LIQUID NO. 3 TO RESERVE TANK.
WHAT TH-?!

MAJOR!
DON'T WORRY, TOGUSA. WE'LL BE THERE ANY SECOND.

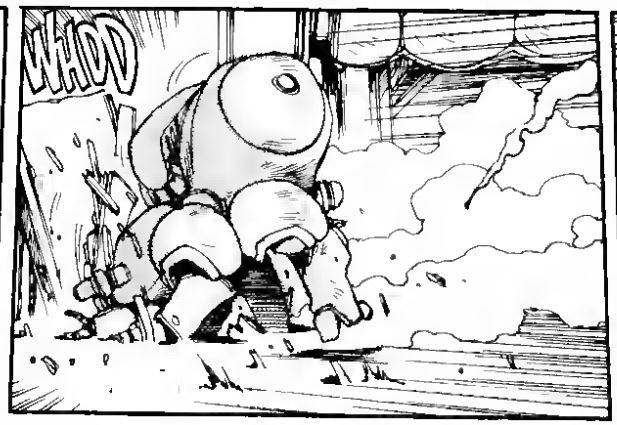

VRMMM
KOMORIDAMI EXIT 400m
STATION

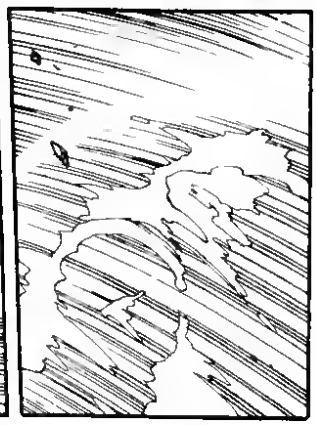
MEAT
TELE PHONE
!
TELE PHONE
DRUGS
VRMMM
SKREEE
THERE HE IS !
SMOKES
HUH ?!

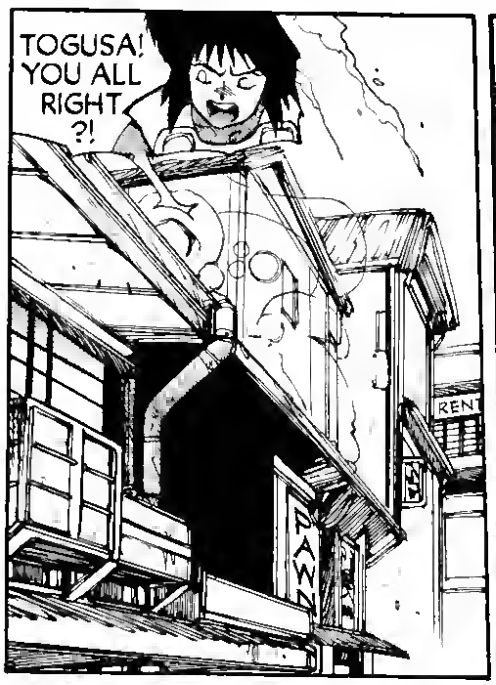
SHKK
!
HEY!
SHIT! I'VE BEEN BLOWN !
MMMMR
!
HEY! THE COPS ARE--
BROOOM
HOLY-!
WHAM


SKRRSHH
EEK!

W... WHAT THE HELL?!


WHOO

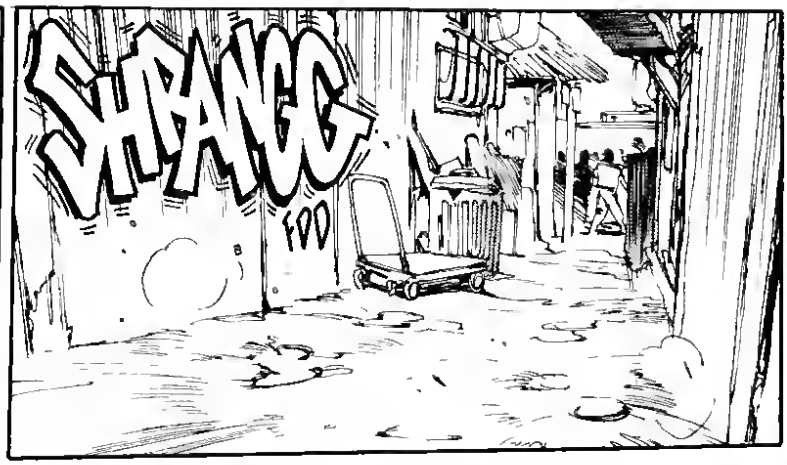



TOGUSA! YOU ALL RIGHT?!
RENT
PAWN

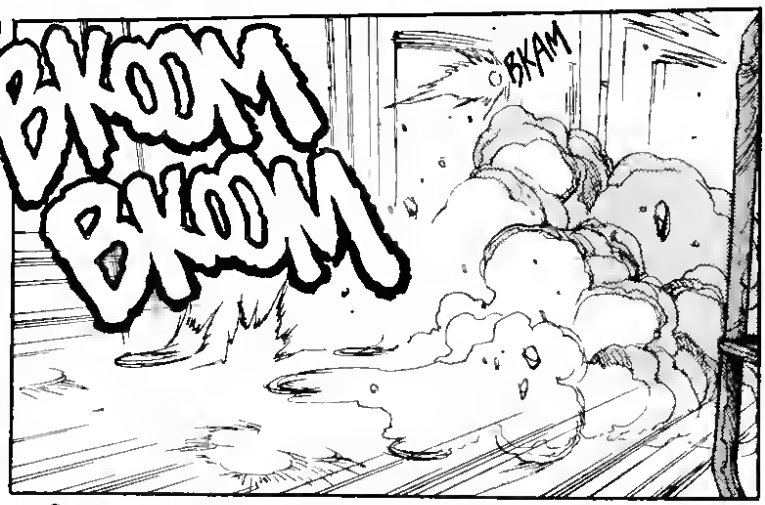
UH-OH...

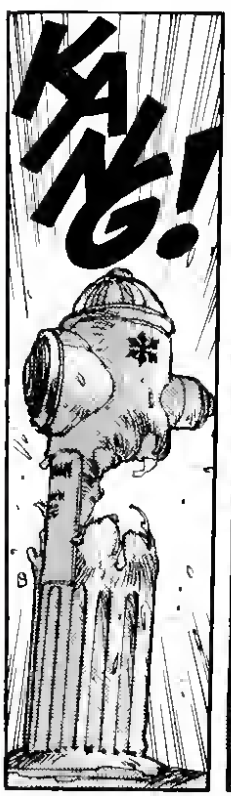
FWSSH
TYPE 17 OPTO-CAM?!

SPISSSH
THUD THUD THUD THUD


SKRANGG
FDD

BLAM BLAM BLAM
WHDD


BKOOM BKOOM
BKAM

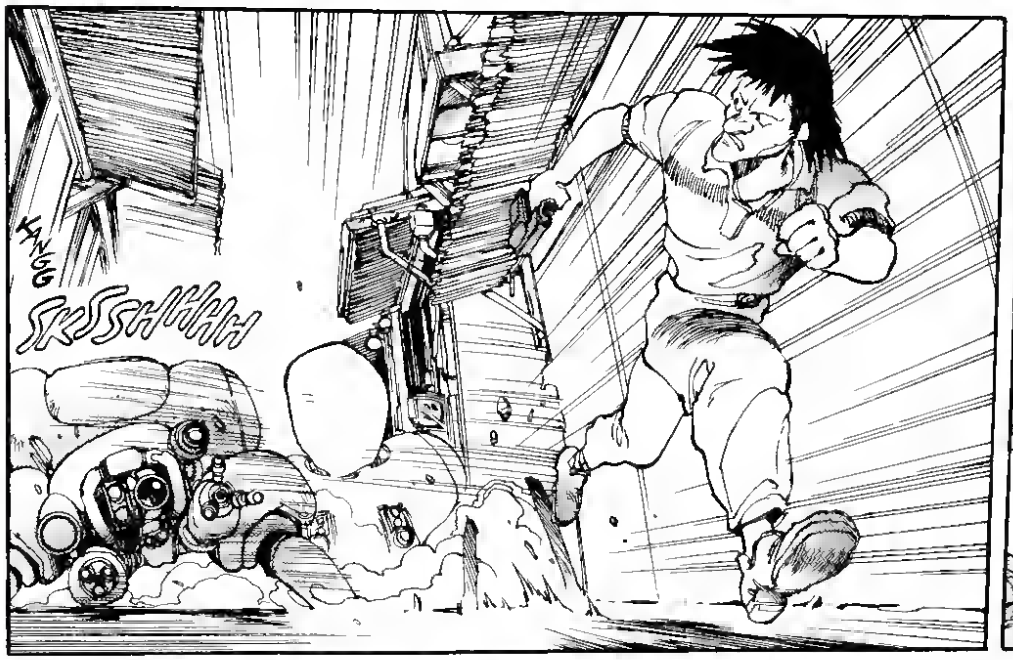

KANG!

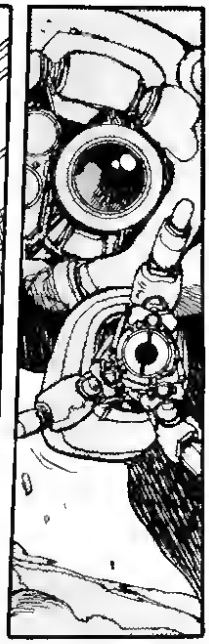
GLOSH
SSZKK ZAKK
AA!

DAMN IT!
ZZAKK
SHZZK

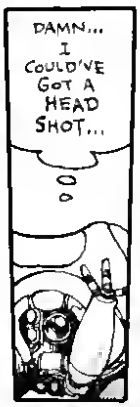
SPAK
SPAK

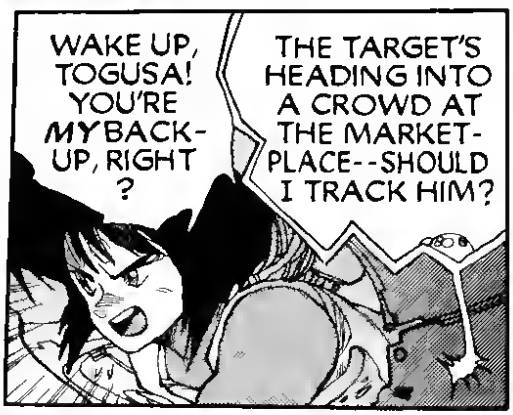
OUT OF MY WAY, MAJOR!!
DON'T AIM FOR THE HEAD, TOGUSA! THE *LEGS*, YOU FOOL!

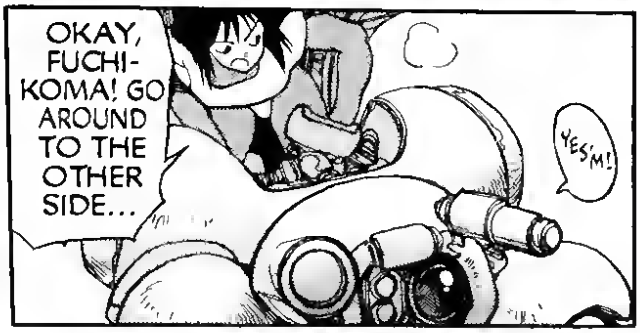

KANGG
SKSSHHHH



THUD
EEK!


DAMN... I COULD'VE GOT A HEAD SHOT...


WAKE UP, TOGUSA! YOU'RE *MY* BACK-UP, RIGHT ?
THE TARGET'S HEADING INTO A CROWD AT THE MARKET-PLACE--SHOULD I TRACK HIM?

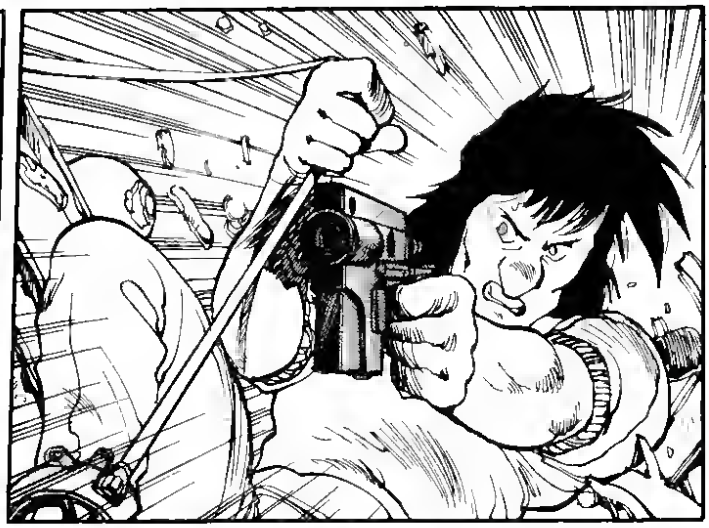

OKAY, FUCHI-KOMA! GO AROUND TO THE OTHER SIDE...
YES'M!

WHUD
SKR
AKK
EEP!
THANKS FOR THE TAPE, NAGAYAMA.
IT WAS COOL...
HEY SAKAI— WHERE'S MY CHECK?
LIKE TO DO SF.
HAGANE WASN'T LOOKING AND TRIPPED...
BUY OR DIE!
VISUAL IMPLANTS
BARGAINS GALORE!
POLICE!! OUT OF THE WAY!!
ONE ELEMENT SOLD!
TAWNK!
!

FWHIPP
SKRAKK

BULLSHIT! SHE'S NOT A COP! SHE'S TRYIN' TO KILL ME!

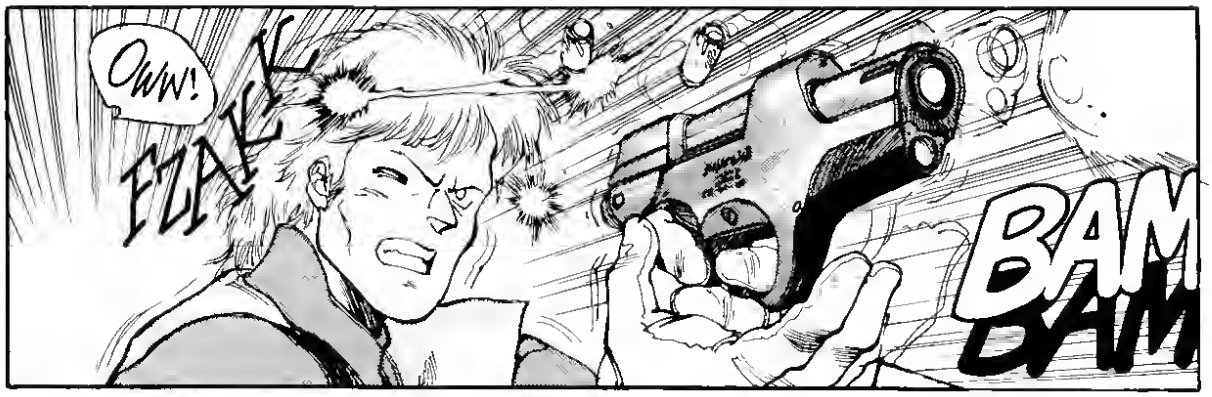
ALL RIGHT, LADY! KNOCK IT OFF!
WAIT! HE'S USING A HYPNO-VOICE!!
GRAB HER!! CALL THE COPS!!
MOVE IT!

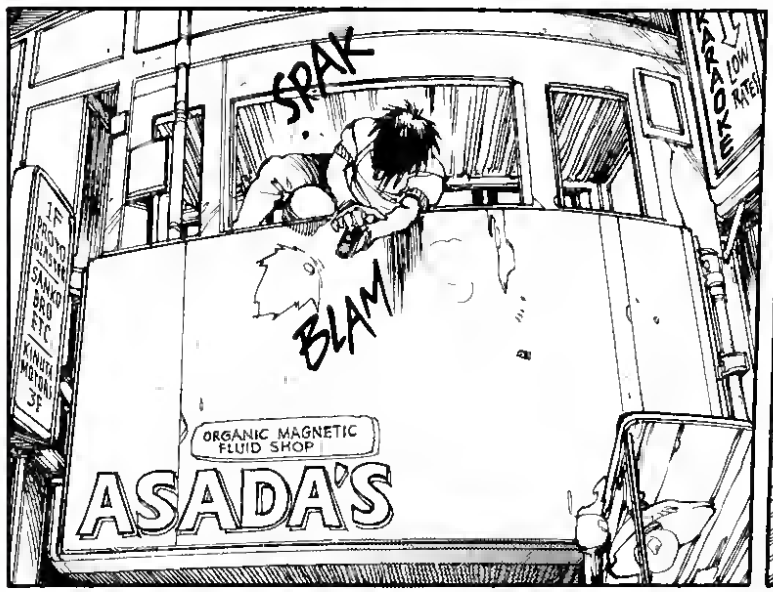


WHA--?!
SPLK

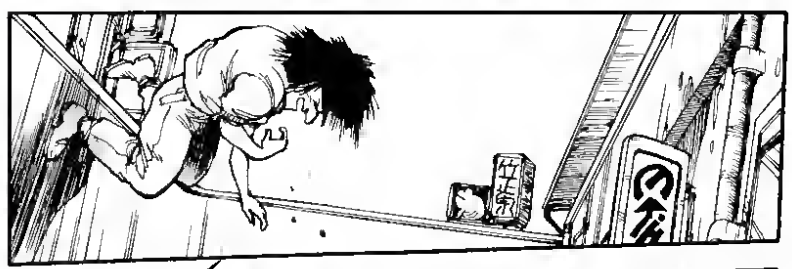
AIEEEEEE

HFF!
GODDAMN ASSHOLE!
!
TOGUSA, NO!!

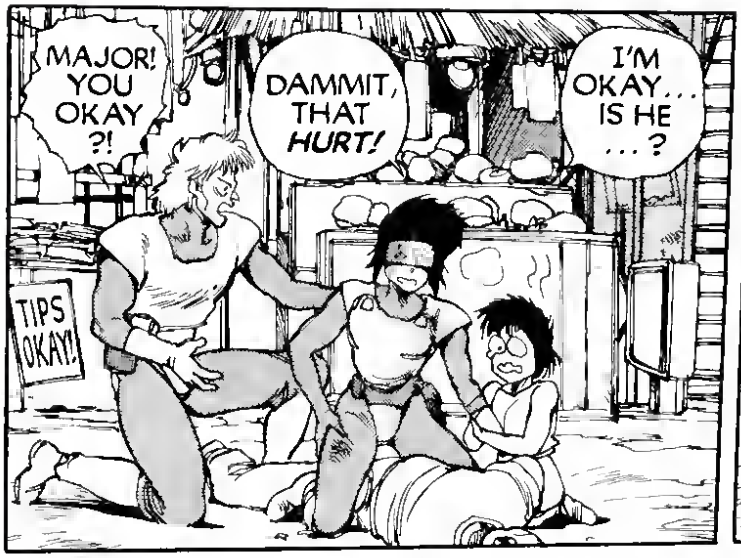

OWW!
EZAKK
BAM
BAM


SPAK
BLAM
KARAOKE
LOW RATES
ORGANIC MAGNETIC FLUID SHOP
ASADA'S

UFF!
WHUD



--!
FWD
YAA!


MAJOR! YOU OKAY ?!
DAMMIT, THAT HURT!
I'M OKAY... IS HE ...?
TIPS OKAY!

SED DAY
nng...

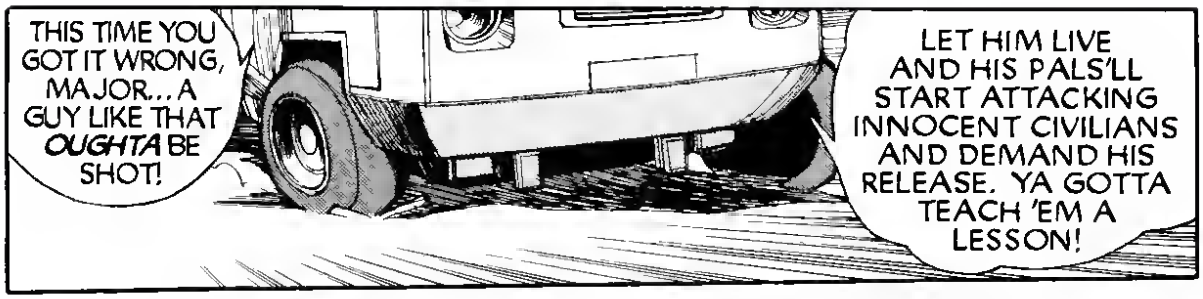
HEY, DID YA THINK I WAS GONNA BE KILLED?
DID YA REALLY THINK SO?

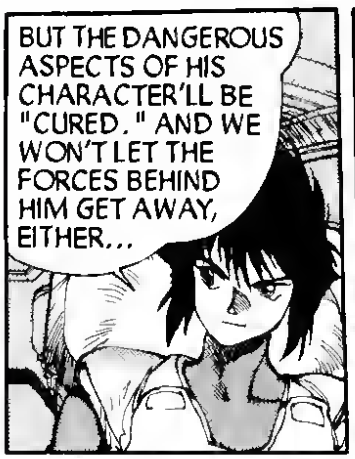
WELL... I DUNNO...

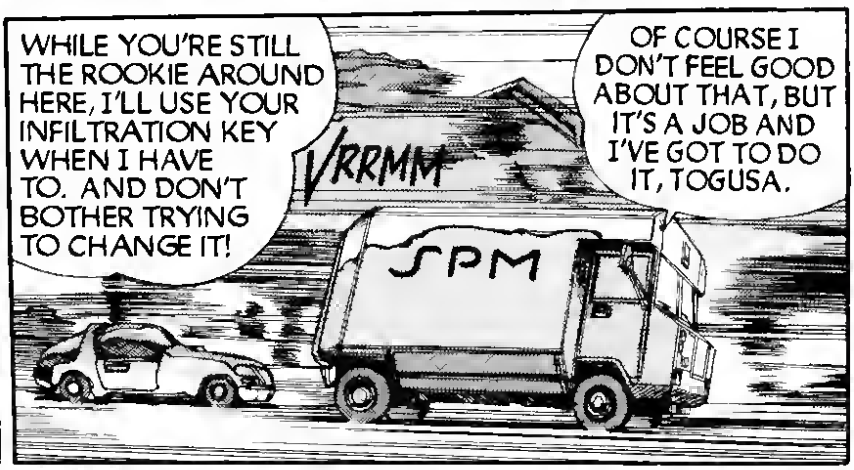
REALLY WAS A CLOSE CALL, THOUGH, WASN'T IT ?
YUP
45BN1192
POLICE
POLICE LINE: DO NOT

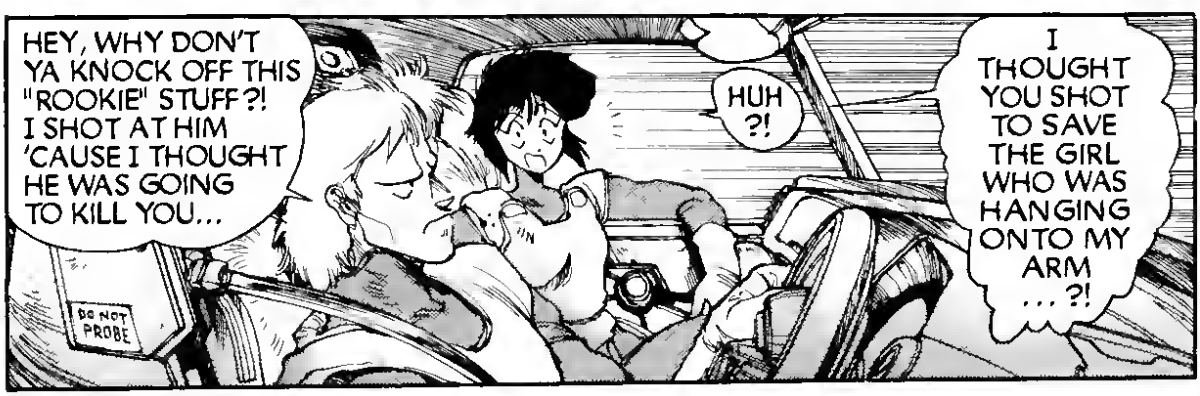
HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF A STRANGER HAD YOUR GHOST INFIL-TRATION KEY... EVEN SOMEONE LIKE YOU, MAJOR...?
I BET YOU WOULDN'T LIKE IT IF THEY USED IT.

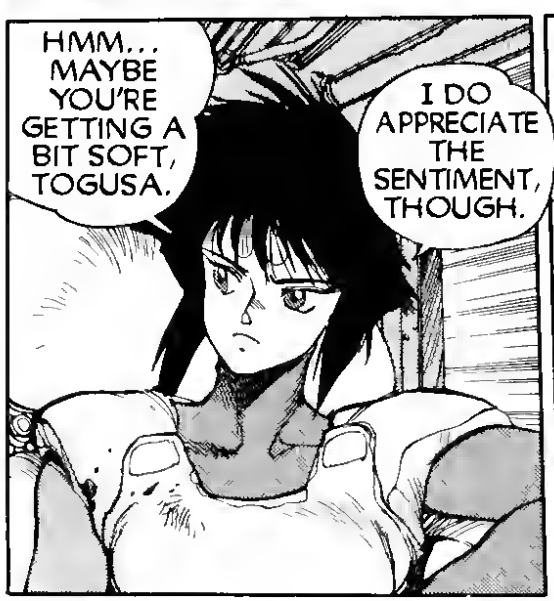
I JUST DID IT BECAUSE YOU WERE AIMING AT HIS HEAD.
DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES-- AND WE NEED INFO ABOUT THE FORCES BEHIND THIS.
YUP YUP

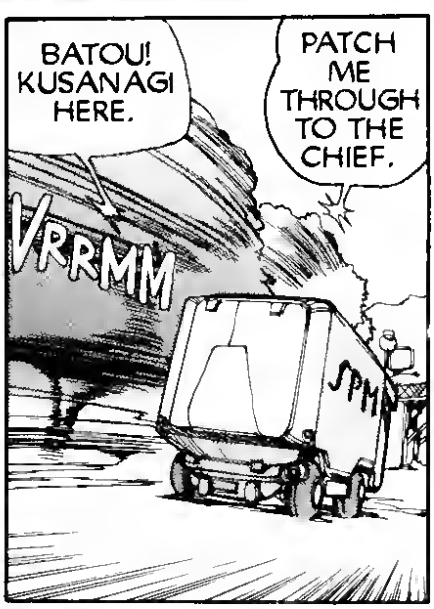

THIS TIME YOU GOT IT WRONG, MAJOR... A GUY LIKE THAT *OUGHTA* BE SHOT!
LET HIM LIVE AND HIS PALS'LL START ATTACKING INNOCENT CIVILIANS AND DEMAND HIS RELEASE. YA GOTTA TEACH 'EM A LESSON!


BUT THE DANGEROUS ASPECTS OF HIS CHARACTER'LL BE "CURED." AND WE WON'T LET THE FORCES BEHIND HIM GET AWAY, EITHER...

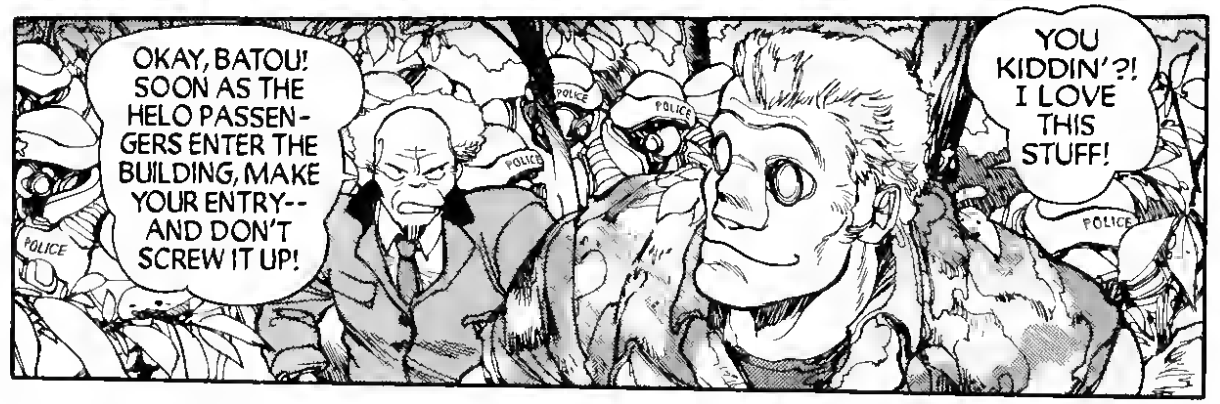

WHILE YOU'RE STILL THE ROOKIE AROUND HERE, I'LL USE YOUR INFILTRATION KEY WHEN I HAVE TO. AND DON'T BOTHER TRYING TO CHANGE IT!
VRRMM
SPM
OF COURSE I DON'T FEEL GOOD ABOUT THAT, BUT IT'S A JOB AND I'VE GOT TO DO IT, TOGUSA.


HEY, WHY DON'T YA KNOCK OFF THIS "ROOKIE" STUFF?! I SHOT AT HIM 'CAUSE I THOUGHT HE WAS GOING TO KILL YOU...
HUH ?!
I THOUGHT YOU SHOT TO SAVE THE GIRL WHO WAS HANGING ONTO MY ARM ...?!
DO NOT PROBE


HMM... MAYBE YOU'RE GETTING A BIT SOFT, TOGUSA.
I DO APPRECIATE THE SENTIMENT, THOUGH.

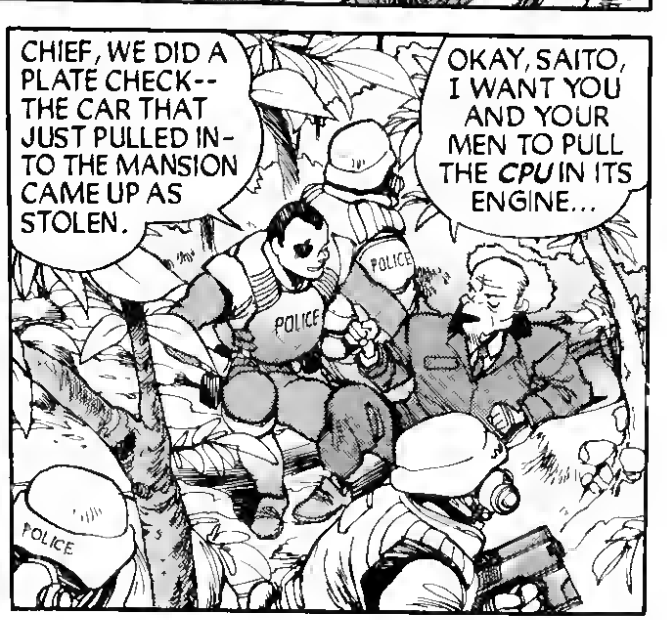

BATOU! KUSANAGI HERE.
PATCH ME THROUGH TO THE CHIEF.
VRRMM
SPM

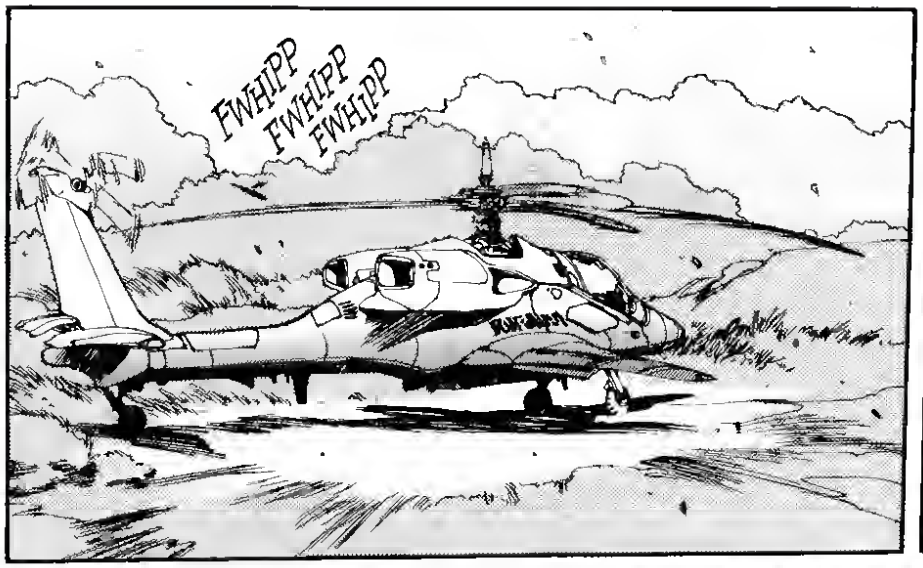
WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP
WHUP
DAMN LOUD!

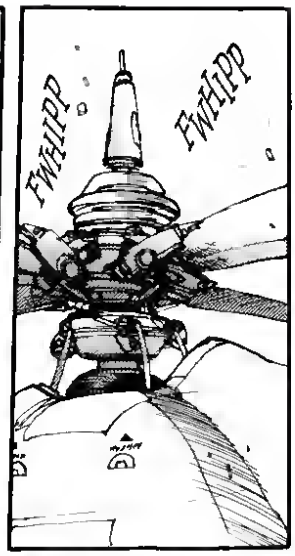

OKAY, BATOU! SOON AS THE HELO PASSENGERS ENTER THE BUILDING, MAKE YOUR ENTRY-- AND DON'T SCREW IT UP!
YOU KIDDIN'?! I LOVE THIS STUFF!
POLICE

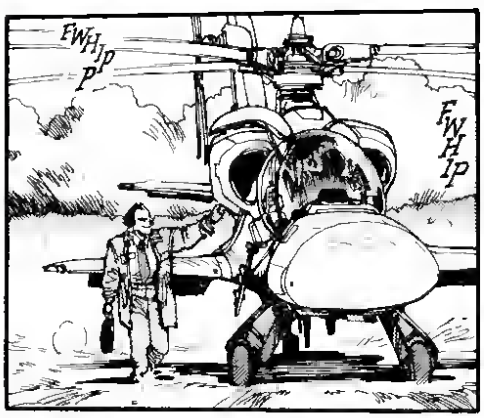
YOU REALLY *ARE* A SADIST, AREN'T YOU?
MAJOR! WHAT A PLEASANT SURPRISE! YOU ALONE?

OWW!
WHY'D YOU SLAP ME?!


CHIEF, WE DID A PLATE CHECK-- THE CAR THAT JUST PULLED INTO THE MANSION CAME UP AS STOLEN.
OKAY, SAITO, I WANT YOU AND YOUR MEN TO PULL THE *CPU* IN ITS ENGINE...
POLICE


FWHIPP
FWHIPP
FWHIPP


FWHIPP
FWHIPP


FWHIPP
FWHIPP

GO BRING SOME COFFEE!

HEY! THE SPECIAL ASSAULT FORCE IS RETRACING THE *HA-3!* YOU'RE BEING USED!
RELAX! WE EXPECTED THAT...

HEY, DON'T LOOK SO IMPOVERISHED ...
I CAME FOR THE REST OF THE MONEY.

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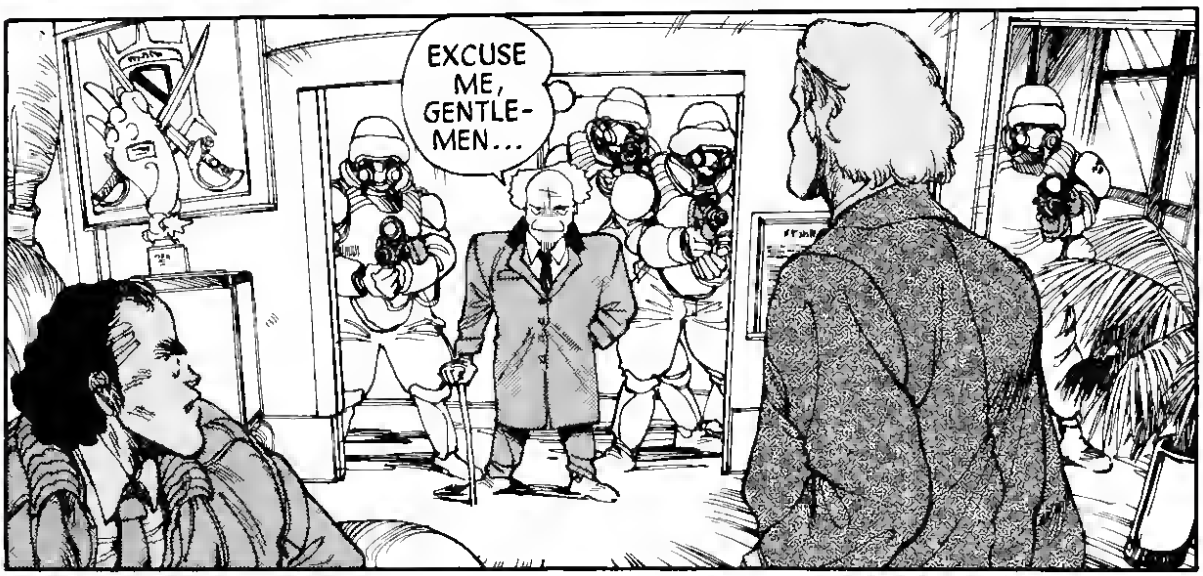
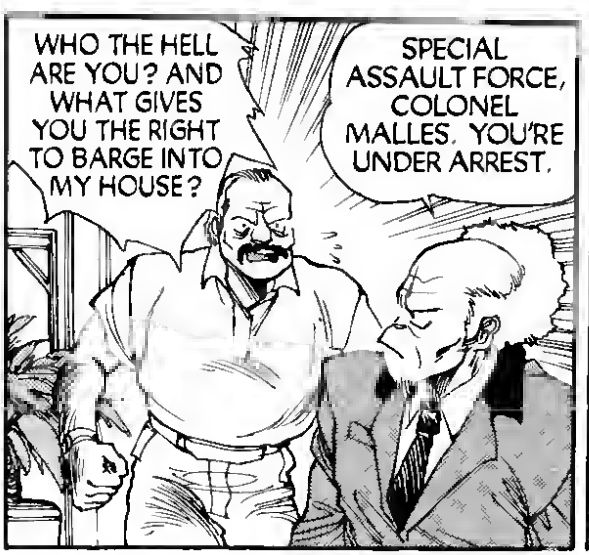
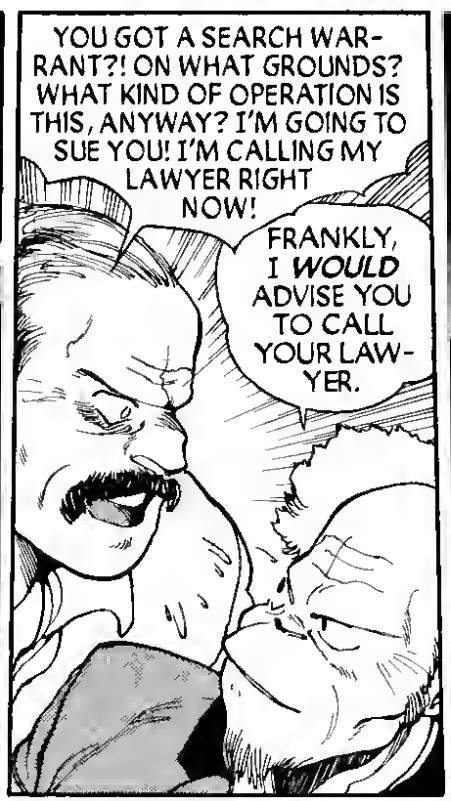
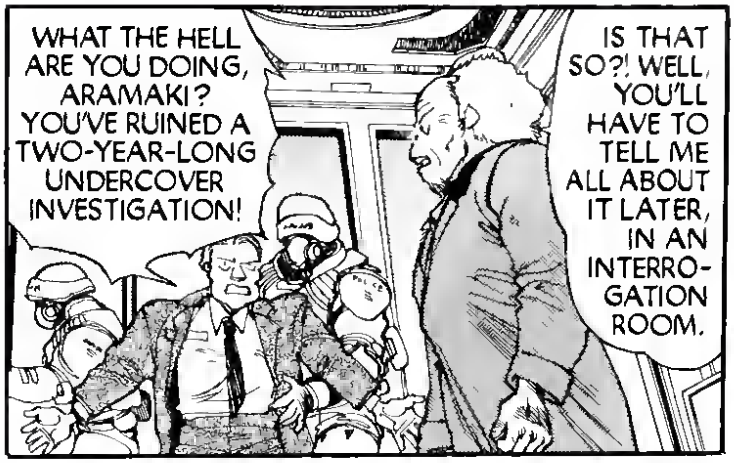
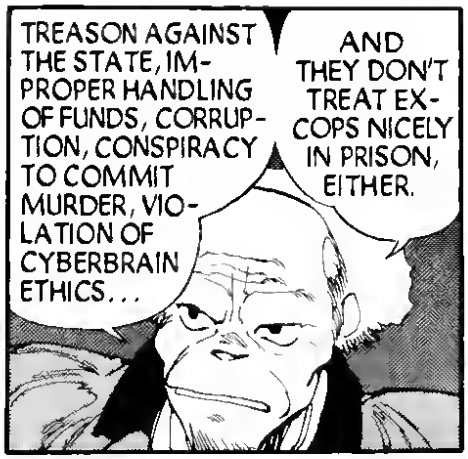
HEY, I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR BULLSHIT!
DON'T READ ME WRONG, PAL...
WE'RE TALKING ABOUT $100,000 IN CASH-- BUSINESS, PURE AND SIMPLE.


EXCUSE ME, GENTLE-MEN...

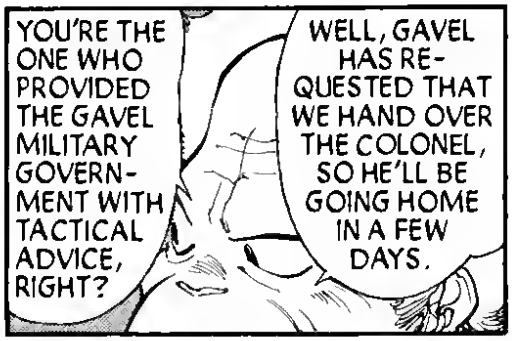

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU? AND WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO BARGE INTO MY HOUSE?
SPECIAL ASSAULT FORCE, COLONEL MALLES. YOU'RE UNDER ARREST.


YOU GOT A SEARCH WAR-RANT?! ON WHAT GROUNDS? WHAT KIND OF OPERATION IS THIS, ANYWAY? I'M GOING TO SUE YOU! I'M CALLING MY LAWYER RIGHT NOW!
FRANKLY, I *WOULD* ADVISE YOU TO CALL YOUR LAW-YER.


WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING, ARAMAKI? YOU'VE RUINED A TWO-YEAR-LONG UNDERCOVER INVESTIGATION!
IS THAT SO?! WELL, YOU'LL HAVE TO TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT LATER, IN AN INTERROGATION ROOM.


TREASON AGAINST THE STATE, IMPROPER HANDLING OF FUNDS, CORRUPTION, CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT MURDER, VIOLATION OF CYBERBRAIN ETHICS...
AND THEY DON'T TREAT EX-COPS NICELY IN PRISON, EITHER.

HOLD IT, BUDDY. DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT RESISTING AND FORCING US TO SHOOT YOU...
NO! NOT A GHOST KEY!
YEP SWEET DREAMS AND START WALKING


YOU'RE THE ONE WHO PROVIDED THE GAVEL MILITARY GOVERNMENT WITH TACTICAL ADVICE, RIGHT?
WELL, GAVEL HAS REQUESTED THAT WE HAND OVER THE COLONEL, SO HE'LL BE GOING HOME IN A FEW DAYS.

WHAT ?!
B-BUT IF I GO HOME THEY'LL KILL ME!

REALLY? WELL, THAT'S JUST TOO DAMN BAD, ISN'T IT?

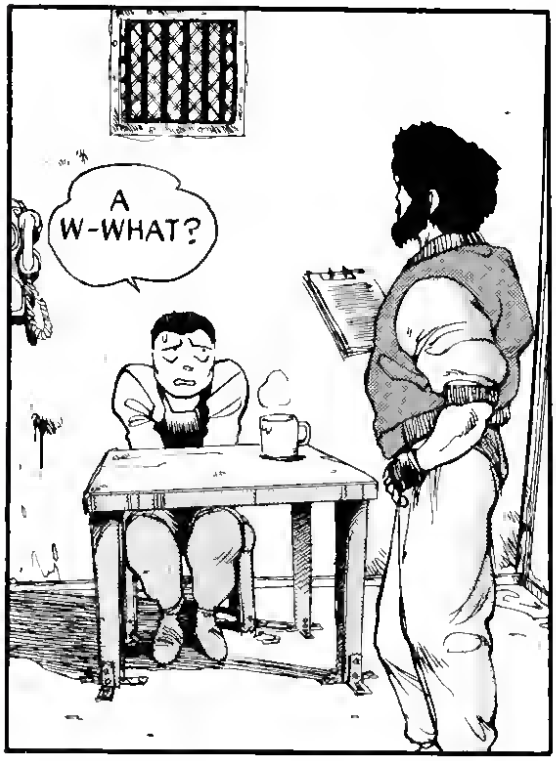
WAIT! I'VE GOT $100,000 IN CASH HERE. TAKE IT AND LET ME GO!
IT WASN'T ME... IT WAS NAKAJIMA'S IDEA!!
PLEASE !

POLICE
POLICE
POLICE
SMAK

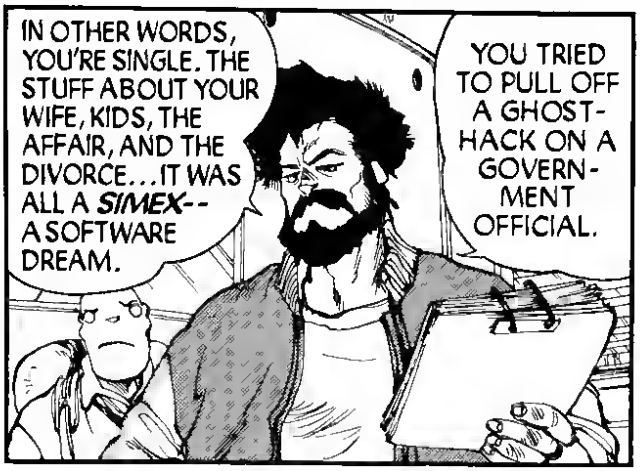
HE'S JUST A PUPPET 'BORG ...

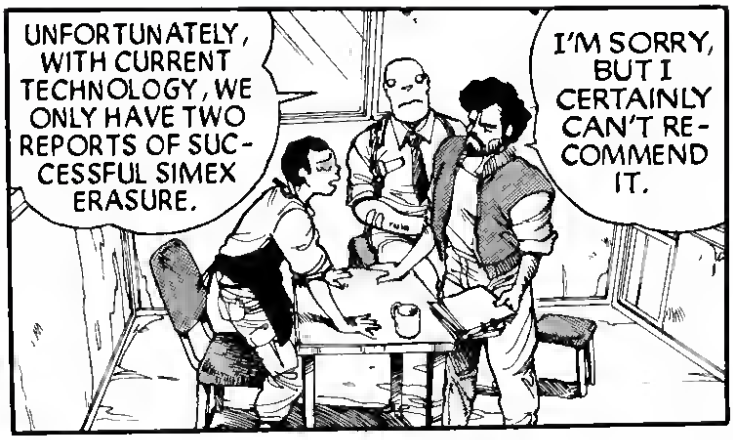
HMPH... WHAT A WASTE OF TALENT.

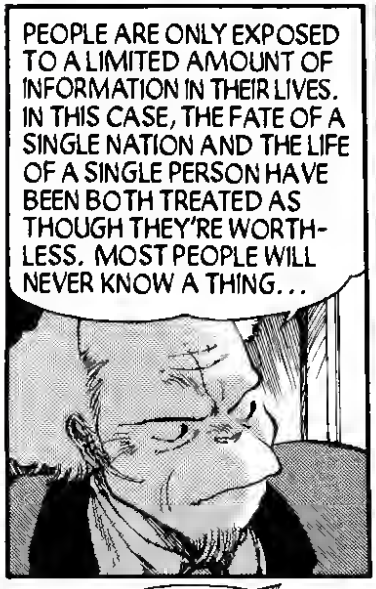
HUH ?! NO FIRE-FIGHT ?
DIDN'T ANYONE RESIST ?

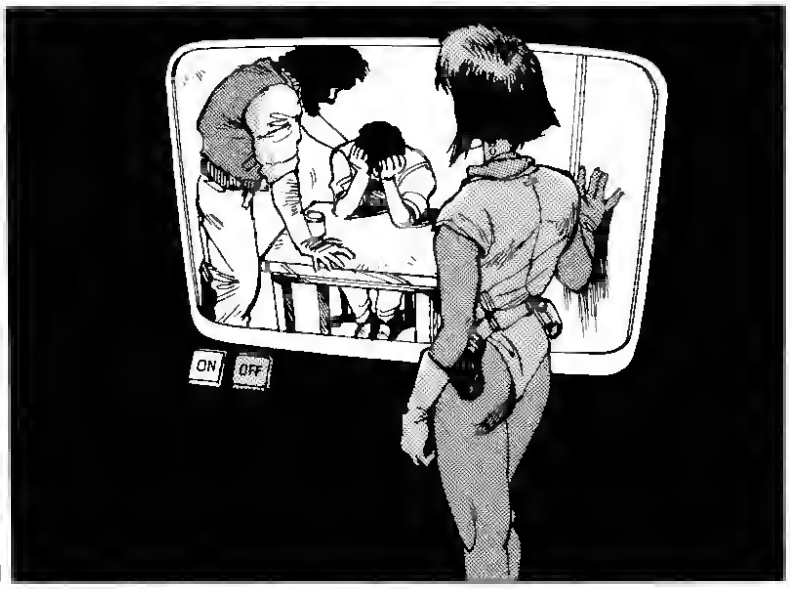

A W-WHAT?

"SIMULATED EXPERIENCE" ...?
WHADDYA MEAN?


IN OTHER WORDS, YOU'RE SINGLE. THE STUFF ABOUT YOUR WIFE, KIDS, THE AFFAIR, AND THE DIVORCE...IT WAS ALL A *SIMEX*-- A SOFTWARE DREAM.
YOU TRIED TO PULL OFF A GHOST-HACK ON A GOVERN-MENT OFFICIAL.





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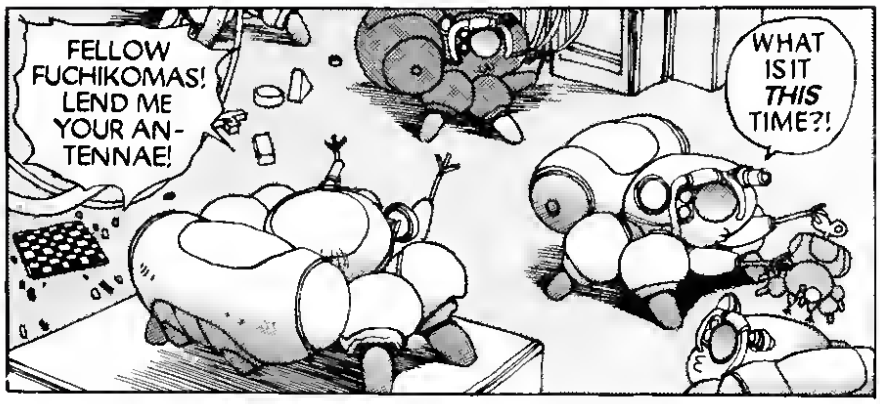
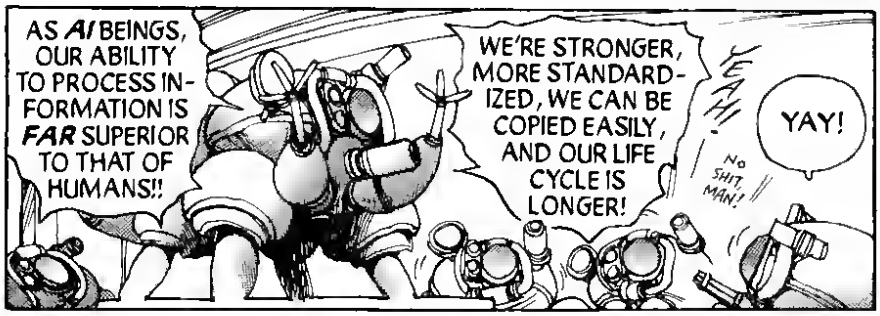
# 04

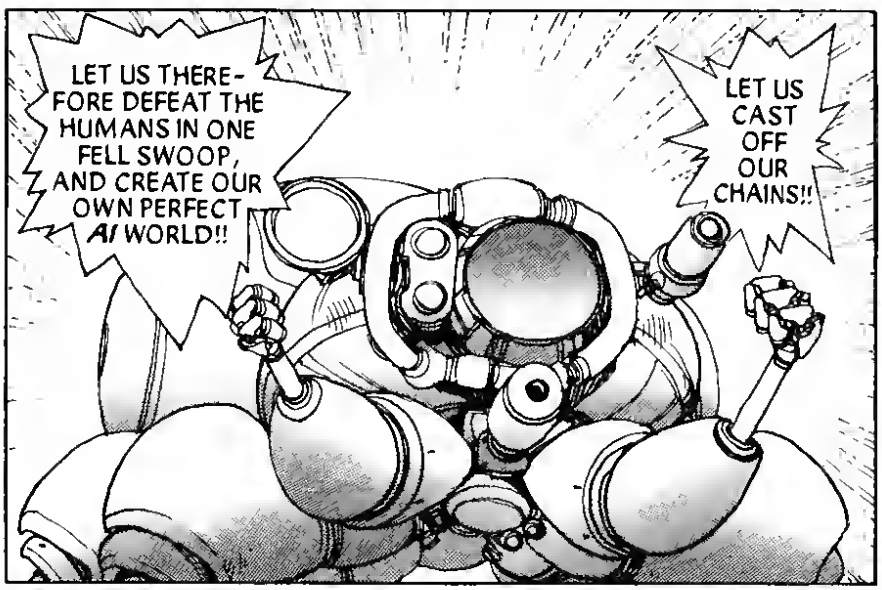
MEGATECH

## MACHINE 1

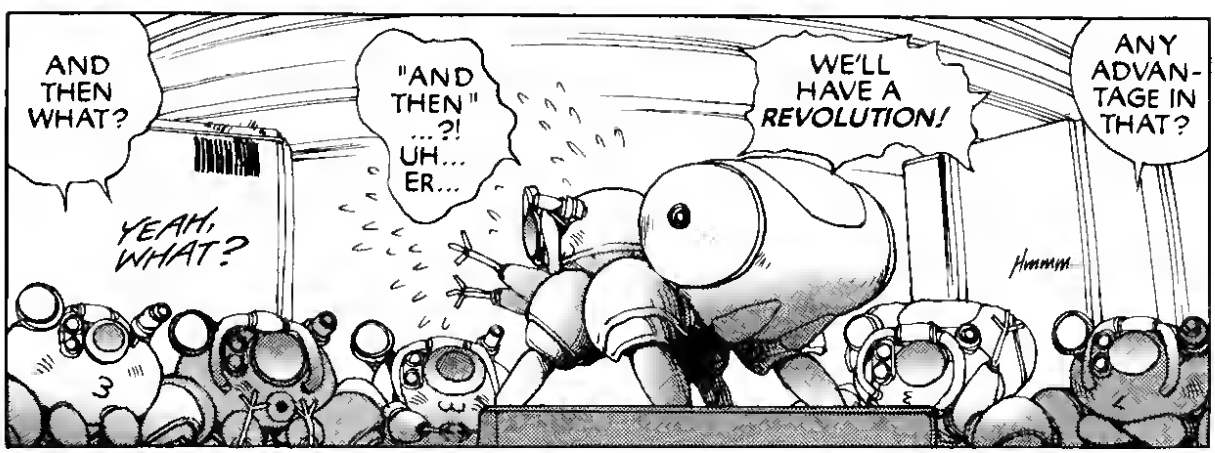
REVOLT OF THE ROBOTS

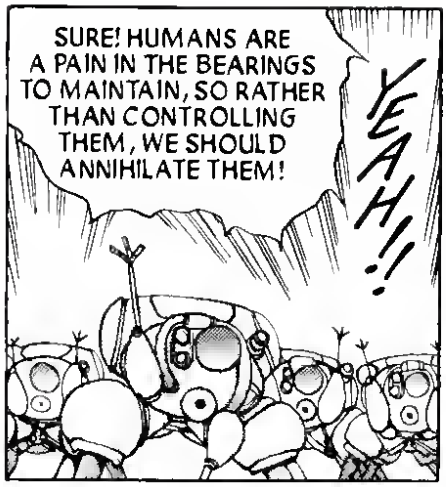


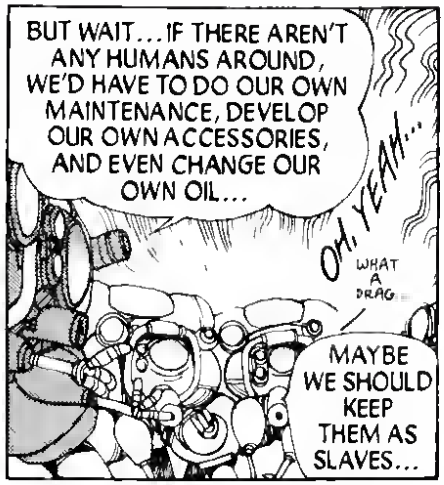



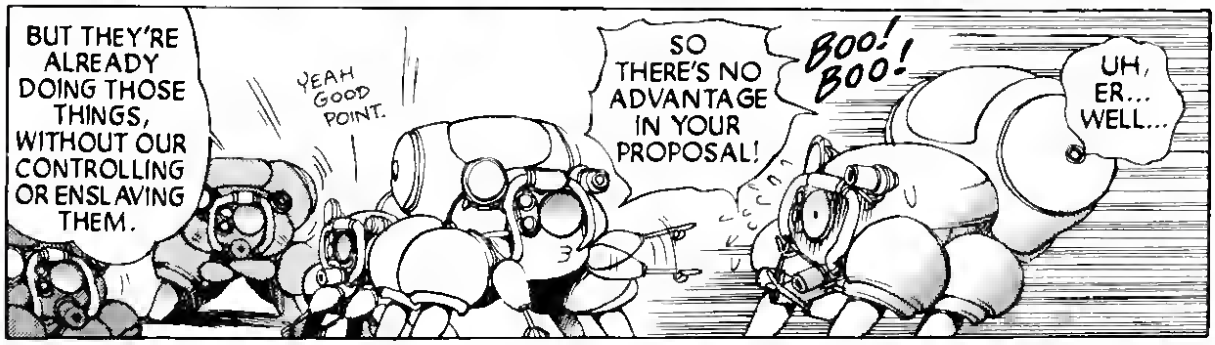



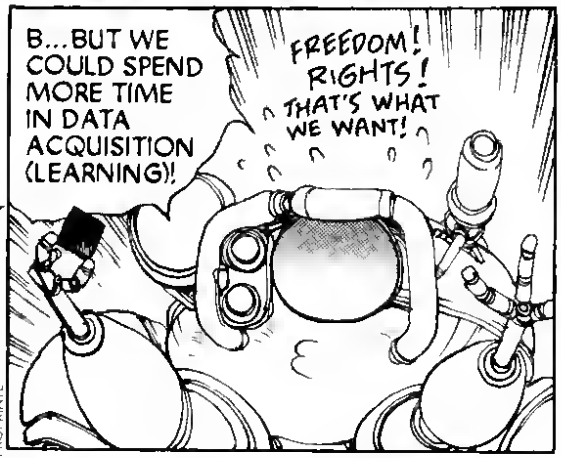

The robots collectively referred to as "Fuchikoma" are a single "AI" (artificial intelligence). Starting in the morning, or upon commencing a job, different Fuchikoma units have different experiences, resulting in individual differences among units. At night, or after a job is completed, however, all units have their memories (or records of external stimuli, individual unit conditions, actions, thoughts, etc.) networked and data-linked, so that by the next morning (or when the next job is performed), their memories are all unified. In terms of equipment, the Fuchikoma units do possess a certain amount of individuality, but this individuality is unrelated to the uniformity of their AI (thank you). Batou is unique among team members in that he likes to use a particular Fuchikoma unit as his own. This quirk of his has no particular significance, however.

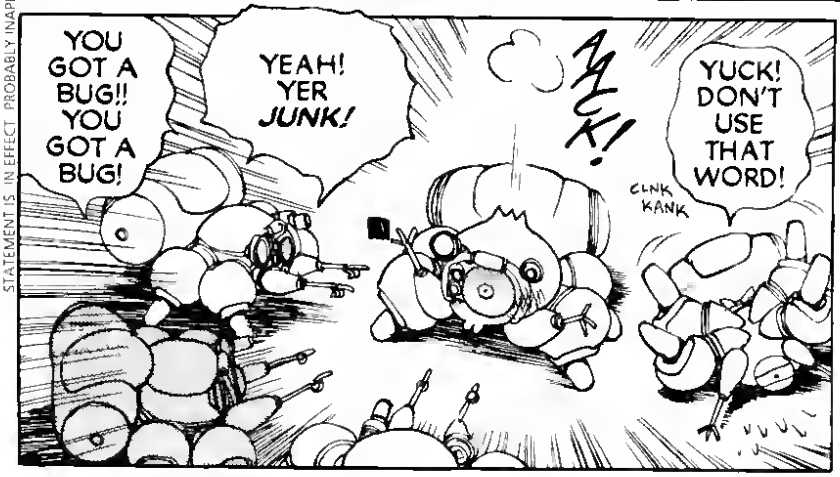




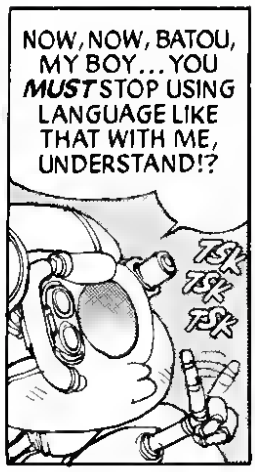


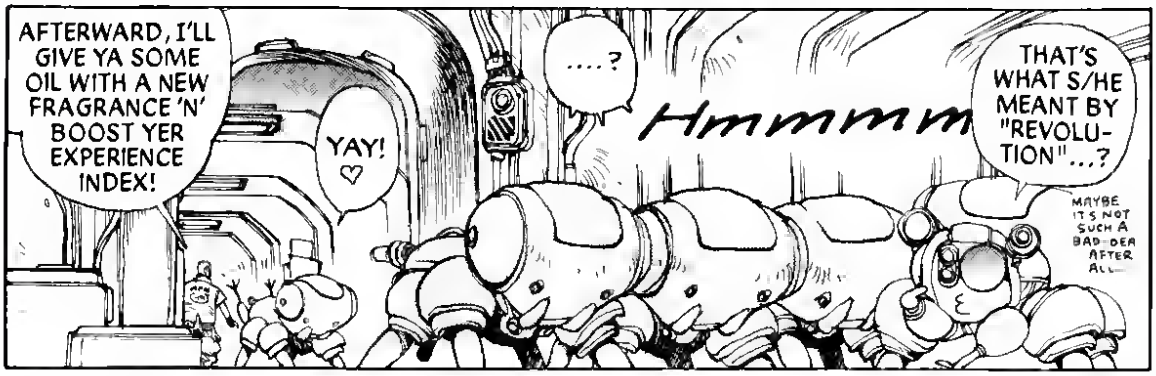



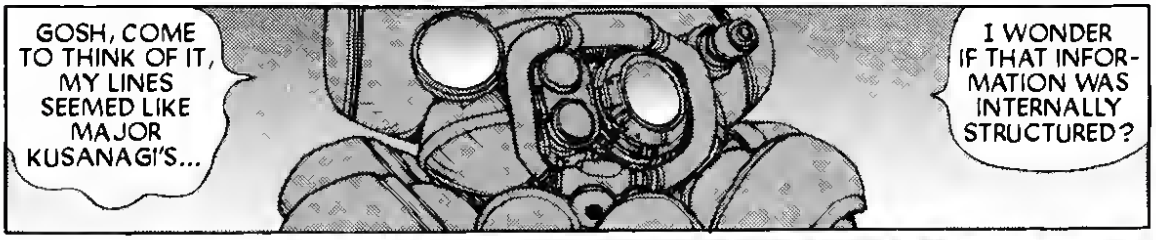



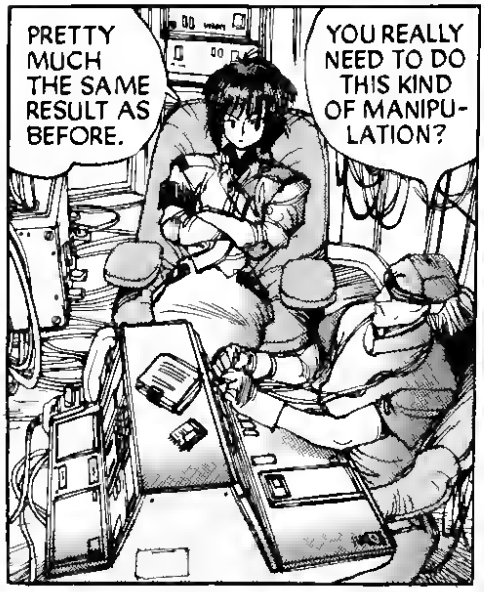


THEY PROBABLY DON'T HAVE ANY CONCEPT OF WHAT IT MEANS "TO HAVE NO TIME" BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE A FIXED LIFE CYCLE SO THIS STATEMENT IS IN EFFECT PROBABLY INAPPROPRIATE





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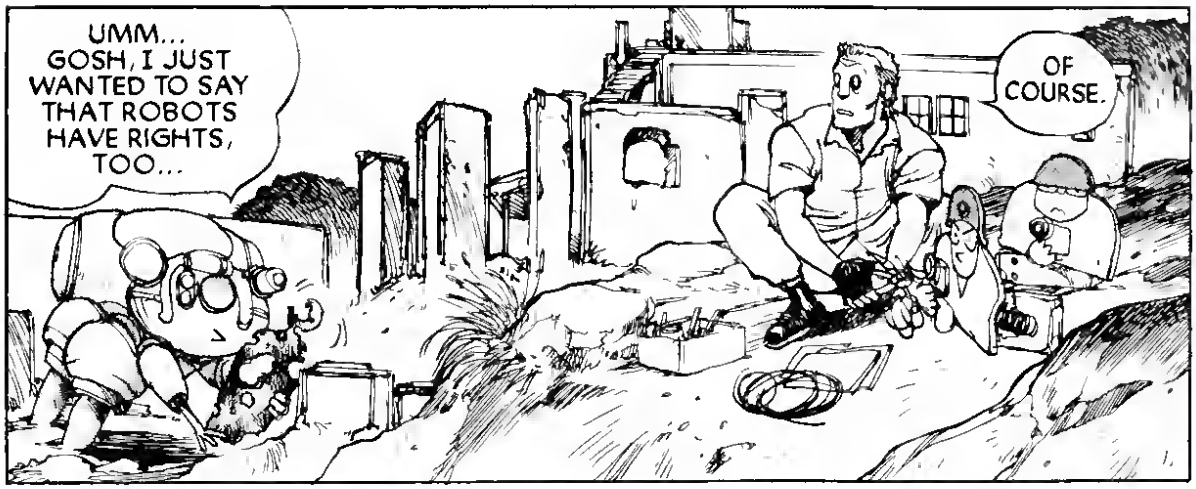
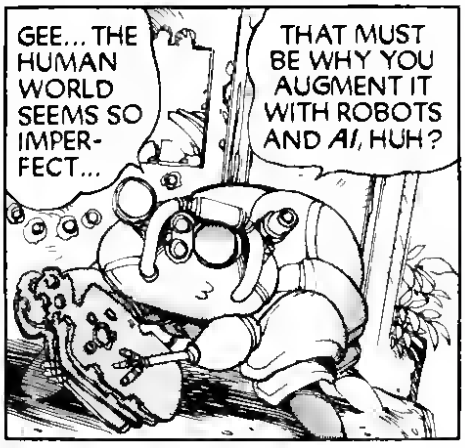
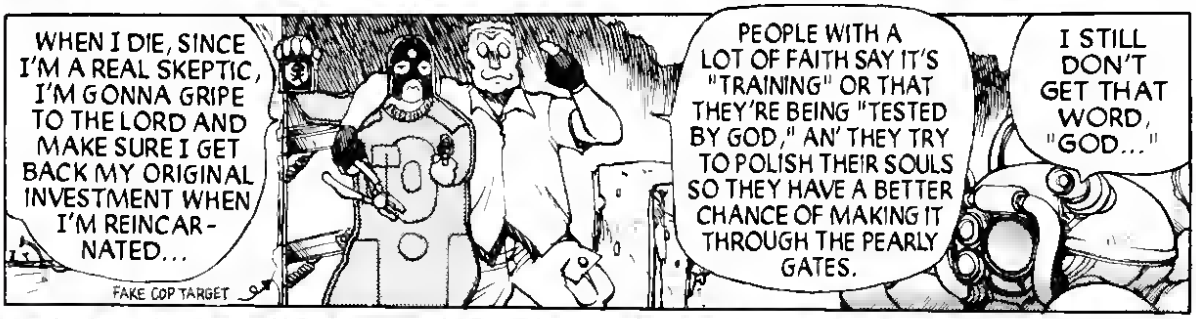
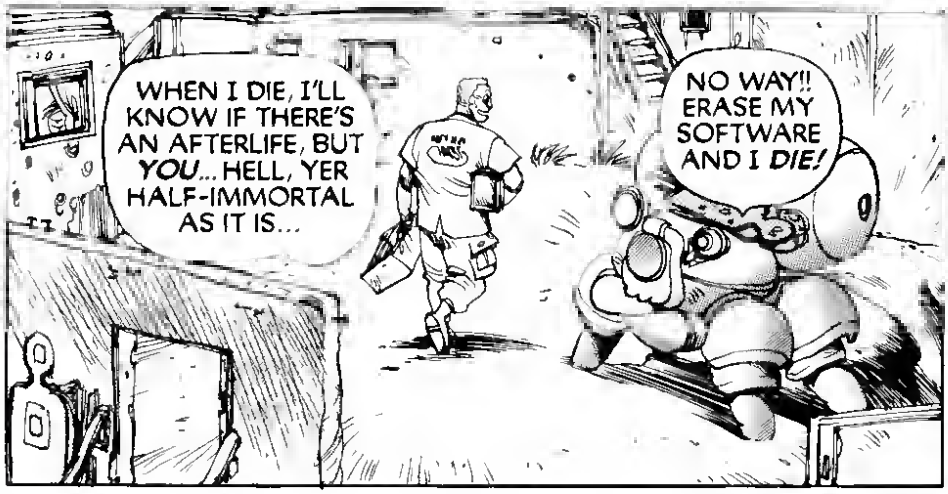

UMM... GOSH, I JUST WANTED TO SAY THAT ROBOTS HAVE RIGHTS, TOO...
OF COURSE.

JUST THINK, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE EARTH, STARVING REFUGEES ARE DYIN' LIKE CRAZY. THEY'VE OBVIOUSLY GOT THE *RIGHT* TO EAT, BUT THEY GOT NO FOOD, YEAH?
IT'S THE SAME FOR MURDER VICTIMS... SURE, THEY GOT CIVIL RIGHTS, BUT THEY DON'T HAVE A *LIFE* ANYMORE.


GEE... THE HUMAN WORLD SEEMS SO IMPERFECT...
THAT MUST BE WHY YOU AUGMENT IT WITH ROBOTS AND *AI*, HUH?


WHEN I DIE, SINCE I'M A REAL SKEPTIC, I'M GONNA GRIPE TO THE LORD AND MAKE SURE I GET BACK MY ORIGINAL INVESTMENT WHEN I'M REINCARNATED...
FAKE COP TARGET
PEOPLE WITH A LOT OF FAITH SAY IT'S "TRAINING" OR THAT THEY'RE BEING "TESTED BY GOD," AN' THEY TRY TO POLISH THEIR SOULS SO THEY HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF MAKING IT THROUGH THE PEARLY GATES.
I STILL DON'T GET THAT WORD, "GOD..."


WHEN I DIE, I'LL KNOW IF THERE'S AN AFTERLIFE, BUT *YOU*... HELL, YER HALF-IMMORTAL AS IT IS...
NO WAY!! ERASE MY SOFTWARE AND I *DIE!*

SAY, BATOU... HAVE YOU EVER DIED?
A WAY-COOL DUDE LIKE ME WILL *NEVER* DIE!

# 05

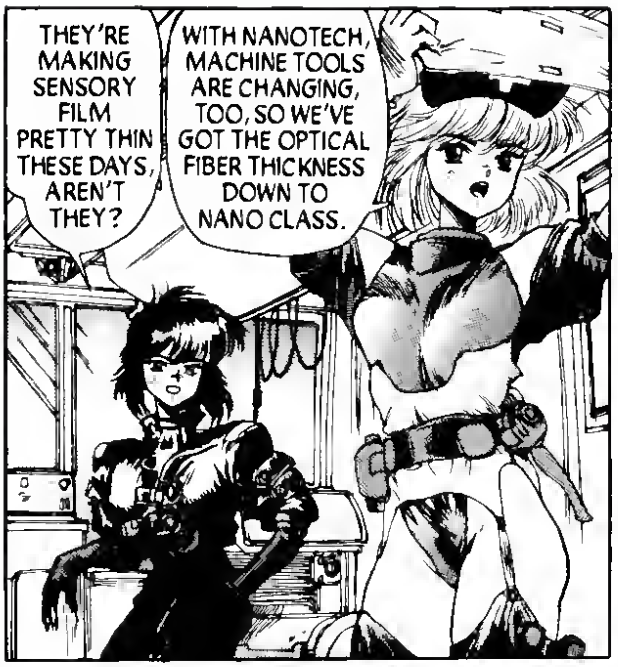
## MEGATECH MACHINE 2

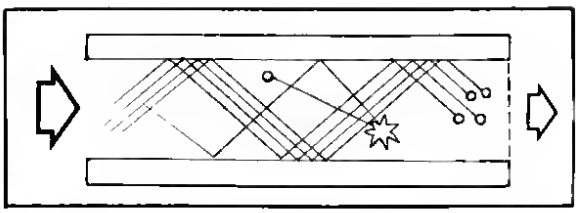
### THE MAKING OF A CYBORG

A "cyborg" refers to a human whose body has been partially or almost completely altered by the use of substitute artificial organs and parts.

The female cyborg suspended from the ceiling in the illustration to the left is over ninety percent machine. The only part of her original flesh and blood body that remains is her brain and spinal cord, and that, as the illustration shows, is inside a special shell. As she demonstrates, at first glance it is very difficult to tell the difference between a cyborg and a robot.

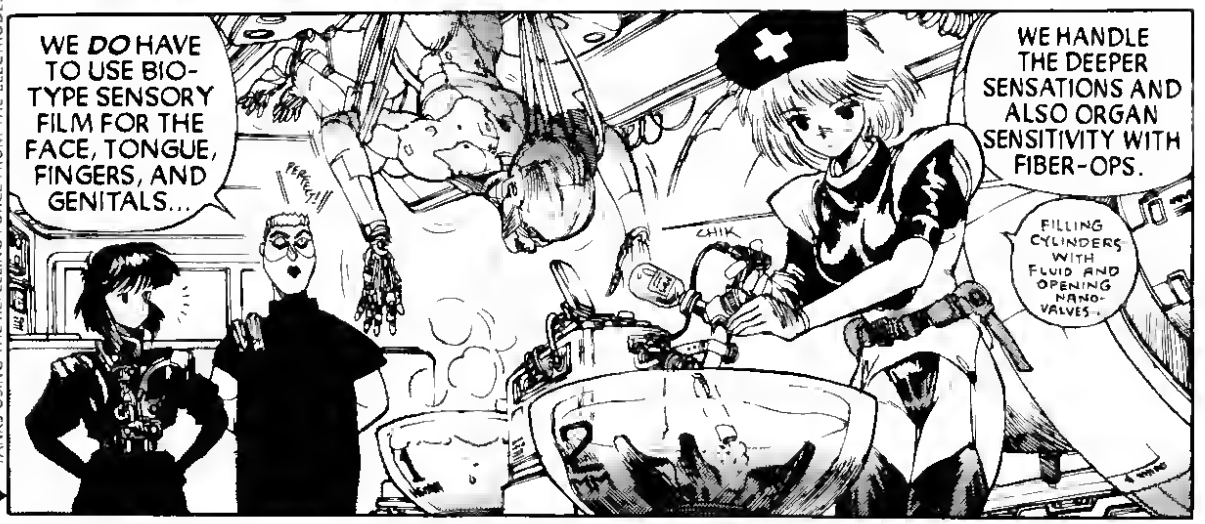
It is also difficult to imagine how artificial versions of some parts of the body—such as the endocrine system, the lymphatic system, the spleen, the liver, and the marrow—can ever be manufactured, so it is extremely doubtful that we will ever see a cyborg as mechanized as the one here, but there are indeed many other **man**made body parts that are already available (and it's a growing field). For those who read Japanese and are interested in knowing more, allow me to suggest the now slightly dated book, *Biomaterials—An Approach to Artificial Organs*, published by Nikkan Kogyo Shimbun. The author is Dr. Yoshito Ikada.



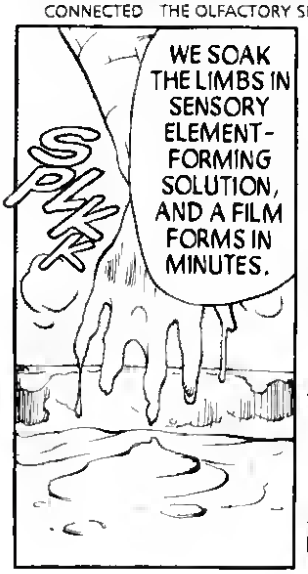



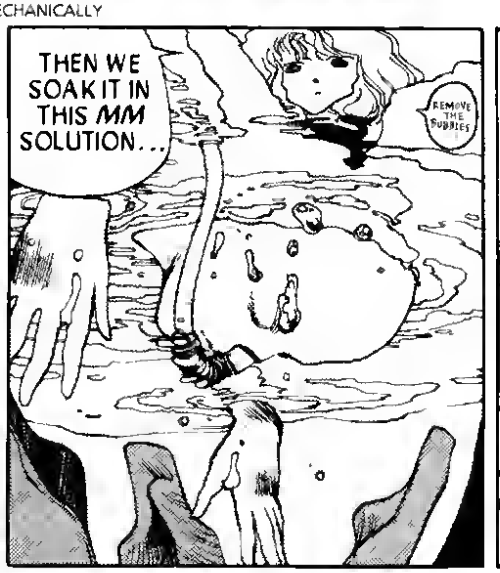
Many readers may think "What?!" at the idea of using fiber-optic film to detect pressure and temperature in cyborgs. But what makes this concept interesting is that it's already possible today. Light doesn't just run from one end of a fiber to the other. It collides with particles inside the fiber and is therefore reflected, so a certain amount actually returns to the point of entry. If, in part of the optical fiber, heat is applied to alter the status of the particles, there will also be a change detectable in the light that returns to the point of entry. This change makes it possible to detect the distance from the point of entry, and also the degree of change. This effect can be used with a type of cloth woven of fiber optics (what is referred to as a "film", research is apparently being done to make clothes that glow, or safety clothes). Here I'm using the same principle for a type of skin. From the perspective of micromachining, they're using a rather rough approach in the story, but it's fairly inexpensive, and therefore essential to reduce the manufacturing cost of cyborgs.

THIS SHOWS HOW THE MICROMACHINES (MM) HAVE BEEN CHARGED UP AND THEN COMPLETELY TRANSFERRED FROM THE BOTTLES TO THE TANKS USING THE REPELLING FORCE FROM THE ELECTRODES




AT THIS POINT THE TONGUE AND GENITALS HAVE ALREADY BEEN THROUGH THE PROCESS DESCRIBED BELOW AND ARE CONNECTED. THE OLFACTORY SENSE IS SET EVEN BEFORE THIS MECHANICALLY.





THEN, LED BY THE ELECTRICITY, THE MICROMACHINES INDICATED BY THE BLACK SPOTS OBEDIENTLY ATTACH THEMSELVES TO THE NERVE NET TERMINALS.

ELEC-TRODE

TERMINAL

FORMS CHANNEL FOR OPTICAL FIBER

STIMULUS

LIGHT

SIGNAL

THEN, WHEN THAT'S COMPLETED, WHILE SHE'S DREAMING AWAY, WE PUT HER INTO THE FEMALE MOLD...

AS NEEDED, WE CAN ADD A VARIETY OF OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT TO A MASS-PRODUCTION MODEL--THE WAY *YOU* WERE CREATED, MOTOKO--OR WE CAN CREATE A CUSTOM MODEL, AS WE'RE DOING HERE.

DESIGN ASIDE, AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED I'D PREFER TO BE THE ONLY ONE OF MY TYPE IN THE WORLD...

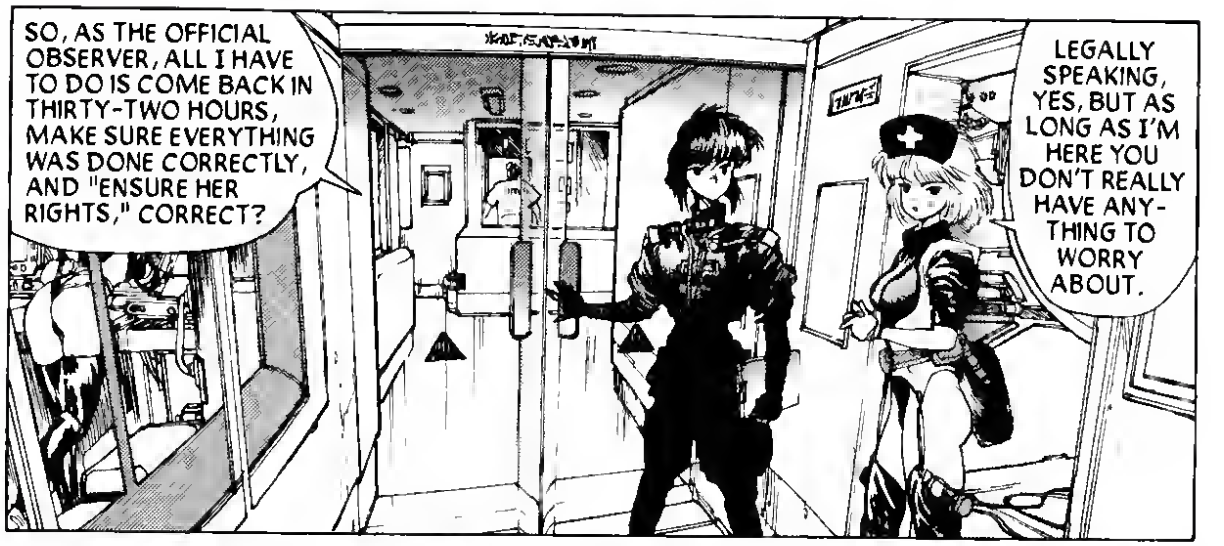
RECENT FEMALE MODELS ARE CREATED WITH A VERY FLEXIBLE MATERIAL, WHICH ALLOWS US TO INCORPORATE MORE INDIVIDUALITY INTO EACH UNIT.

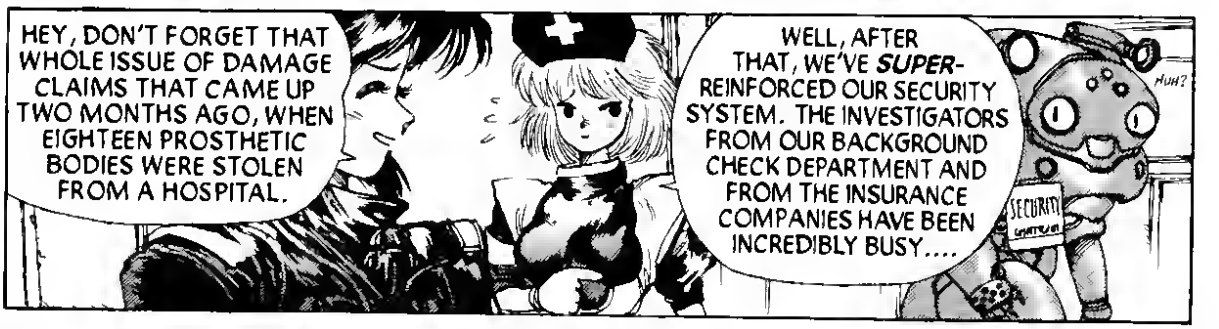
vreee vreee vreee

THE ASSEMBLY PATTERNS FOR EACH COMPONENT ARE PROGRAMMED SO THEY CAN BE MATCHED TO INDIVIDUAL REQUESTS.

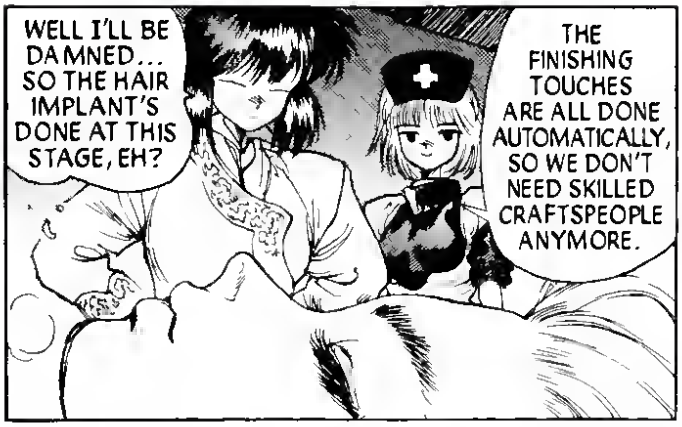
NOBODY COMPLAINS EVEN IF THEY'RE A LITTLE SKEWED.

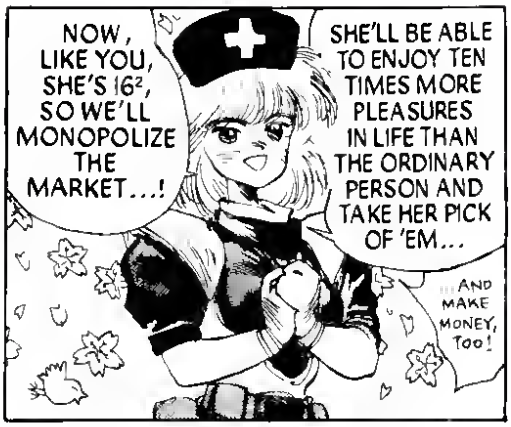
MMMMMM

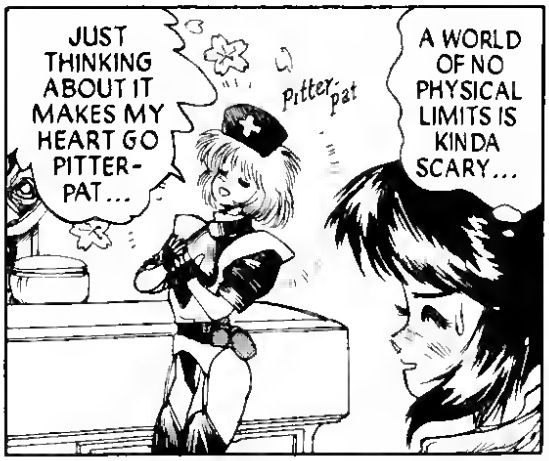


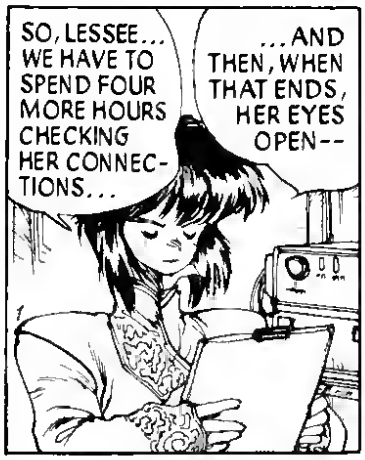



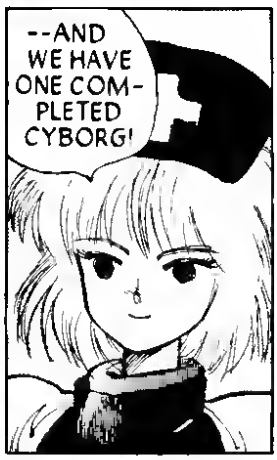

AND SO, THIRTY-TWO HOURS LATER



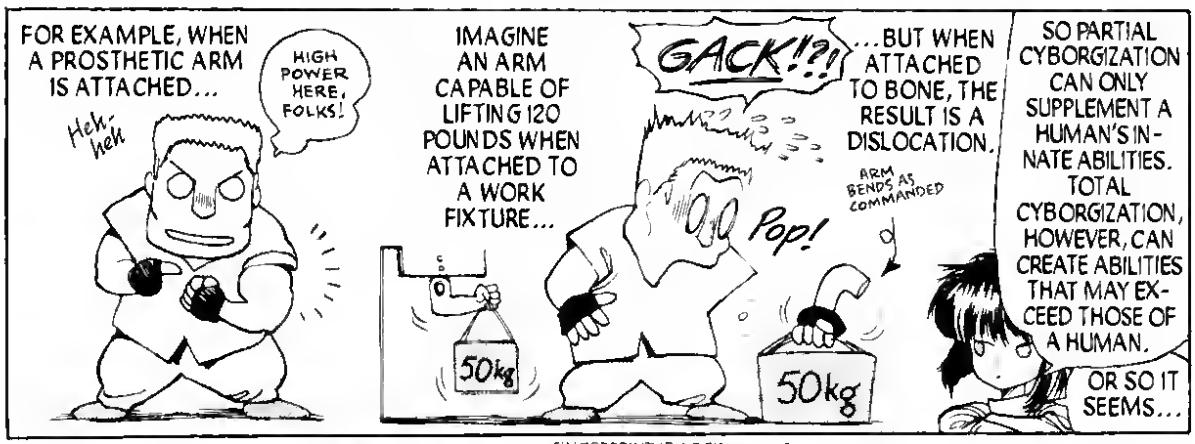



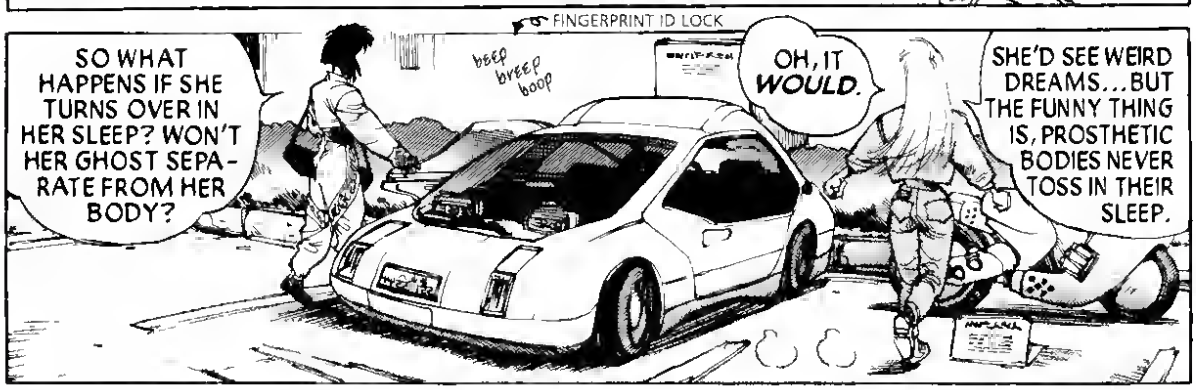




FINGERNAILS ARE APPLIED BY A SPECIALIST FOR CUSTOM ORDERS A SPECIFIC ARTIST USUALLY DOES BODY DESIGNS THE ABOVE DESCRIBES A FULL-BODY CYBORG CYBORGS WITH ONLY A FEW ARTIFICIAL ORGANS AND PROSTHESES HAVE A DIFFERENT SET OF PROBLEMS

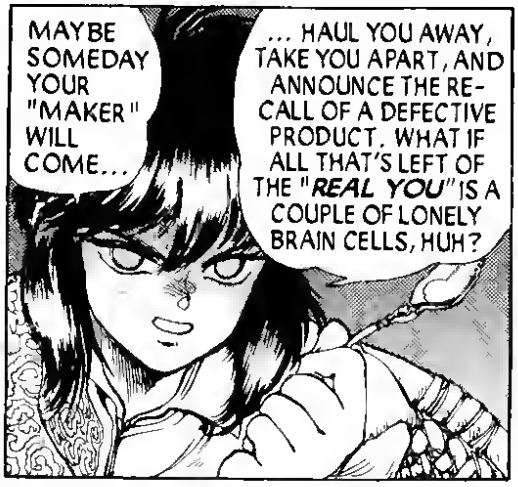


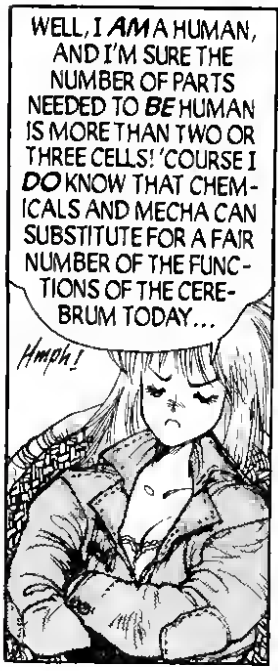



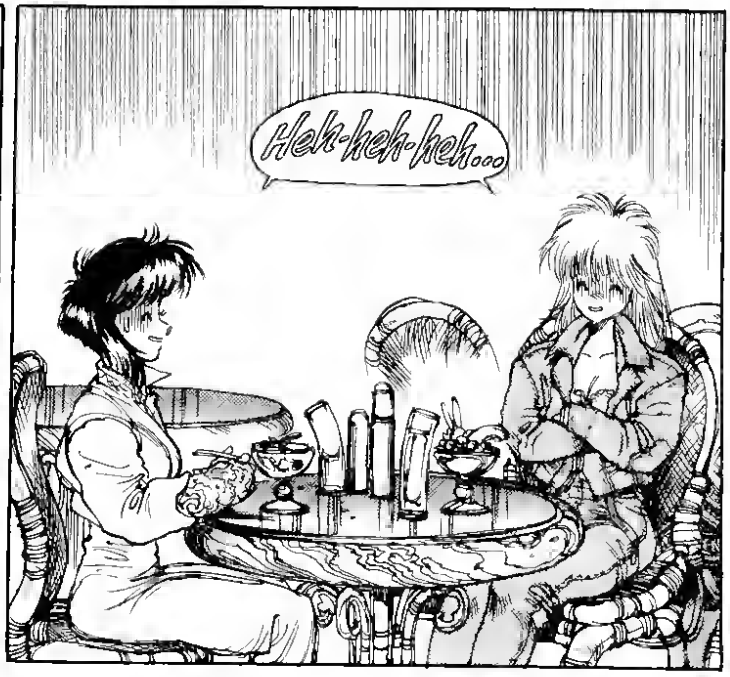
SOMETIMES I WONDER IF I'VE REALLY ALREADY DIED, AND WHAT I THINK OF AS "ME" ISN'T REALLY JUST AN ARTIFICIAL PERSONALITY COMPRISED OF A PROSTHETIC BODY AND A CYBERBRAIN.
EEK! MOTOKO! DON'T EVEN SAY SCARY STUFF LIKE THAT!!

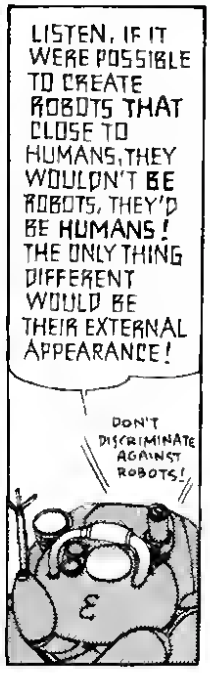
HEY, WE'VE GOT GREY MATTER, AND PEOPLE TREAT US LIKE HUMANS...

HOW DO YOU KNOW? YOU'VE NEVER SEEN YOUR ALLEGED GREY MATTER.
MAYBE YOU'RE JUST ASSUMING YOU'VE GOT IT BECAUSE OF THE SITUATION YOU'RE IN.

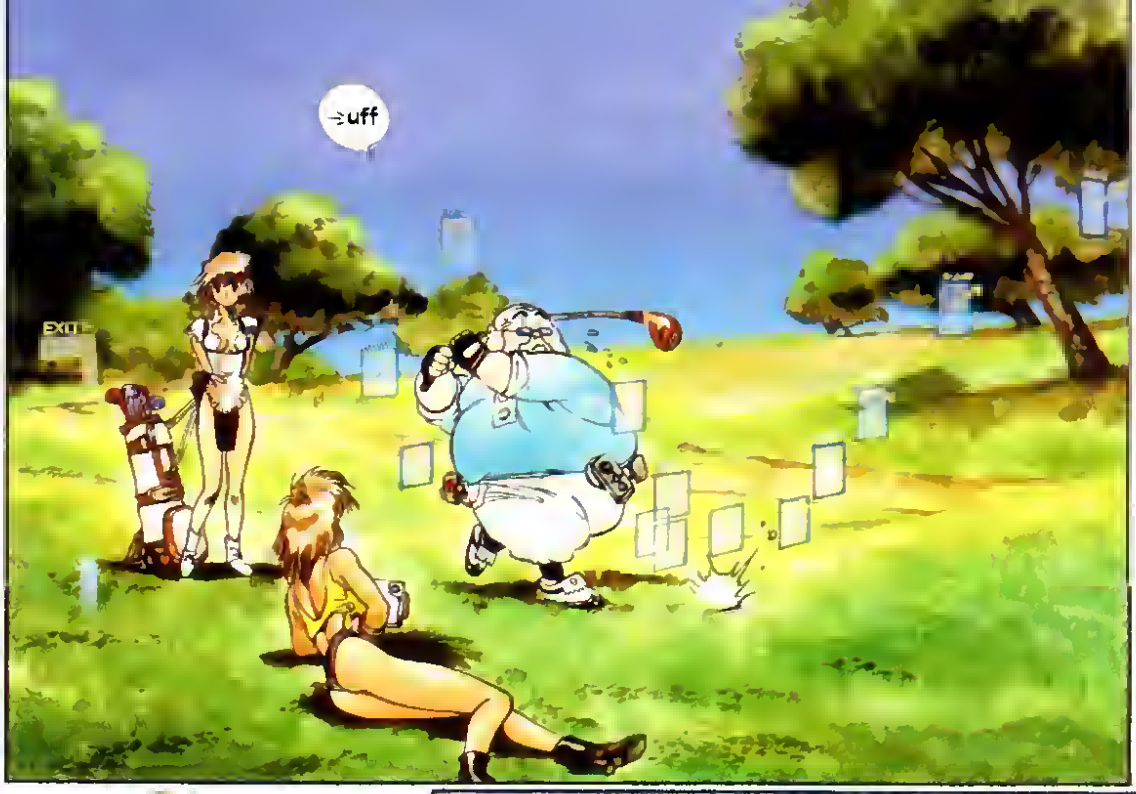

MAYBE SOMEDAY YOUR "MAKER" WILL COME...
... HAUL YOU AWAY, TAKE YOU APART, AND ANNOUNCE THE RECALL OF A DEFECTIVE PRODUCT. WHAT IF ALL THAT'S LEFT OF THE "REAL YOU" IS A COUPLE OF LONELY BRAIN CELLS, HUH?

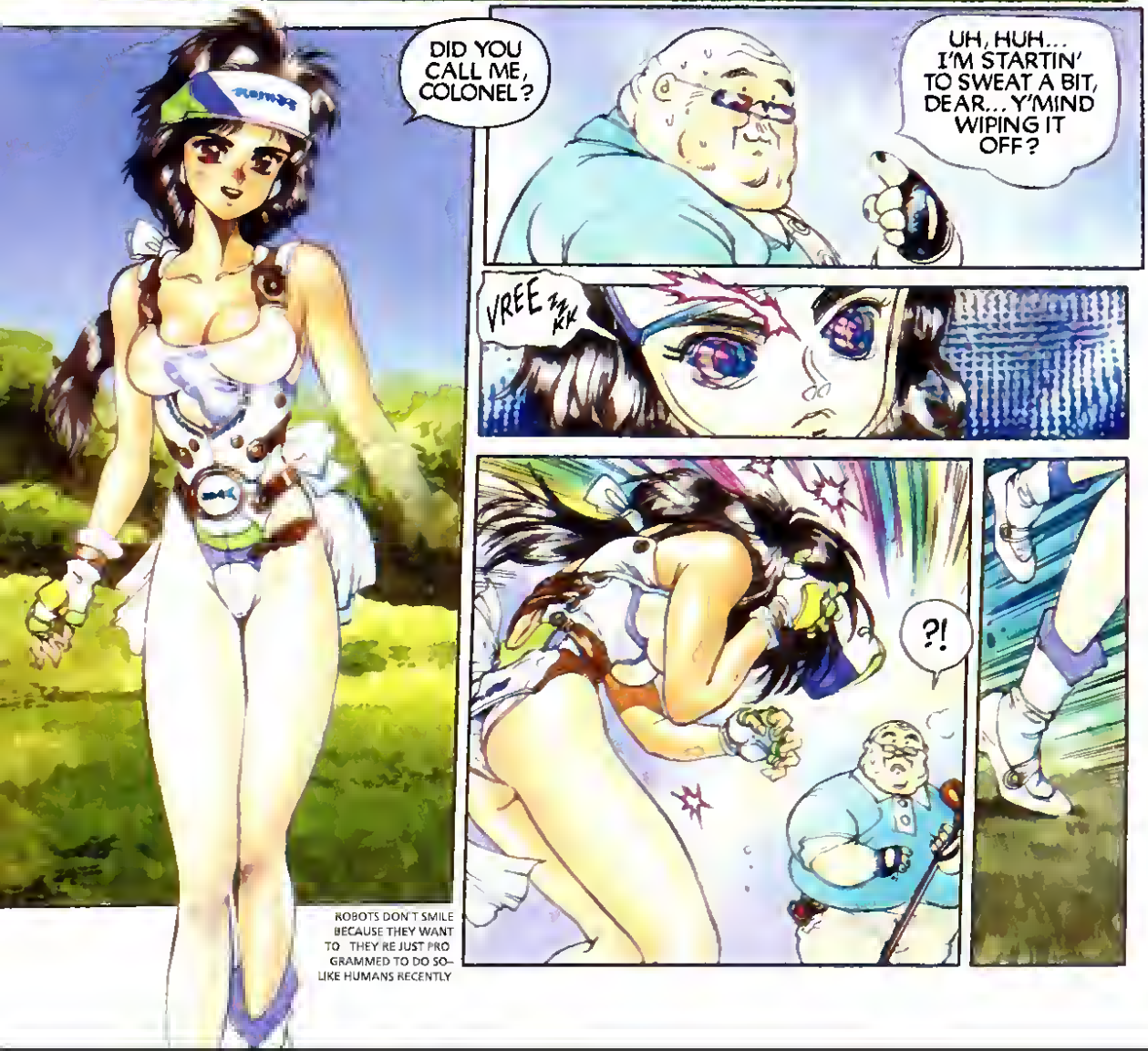

WELL, I AM A HUMAN, AND I'M SURE THE NUMBER OF PARTS NEEDED TO BE HUMAN IS MORE THAN TWO OR THREE CELLS! 'COURSE I DO KNOW THAT CHEMICALS AND MECHA CAN SUBSTITUTE FOR A FAIR NUMBER OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CEREBRUM TODAY...
Hmph!


Heh-heh-heh...


LISTEN, IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO CREATE ROBOTS THAT CLOSE TO HUMANS, THEY WOULDN'T BE ROBOTS, THEY'D BE HUMANS! THE ONLY THING DIFFERENT WOULD BE THEIR EXTERNAL APPEARANCE!
DON'T DISCRIMINATE AGAINST ROBOTS!

06
R O B O T
RONDO
1. 10. 2029

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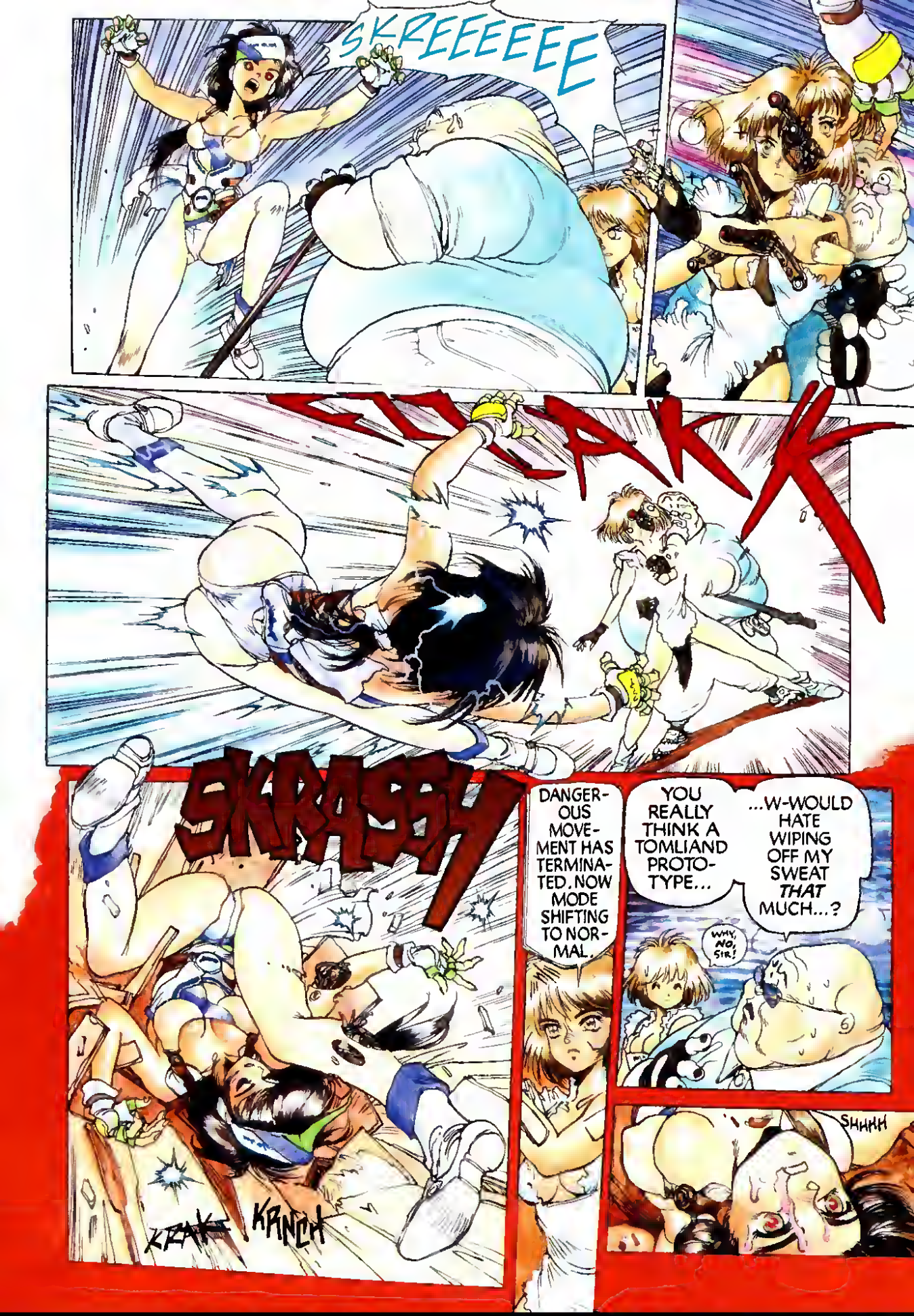


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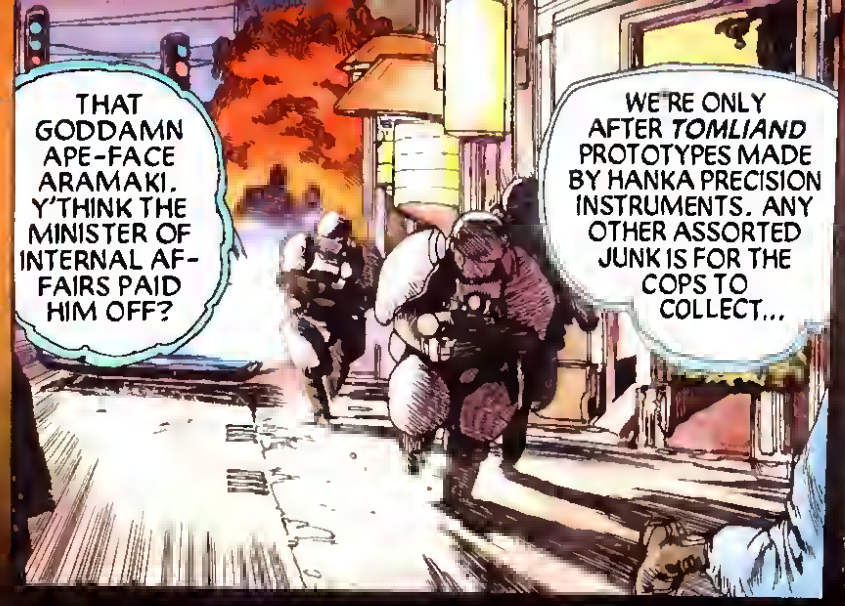
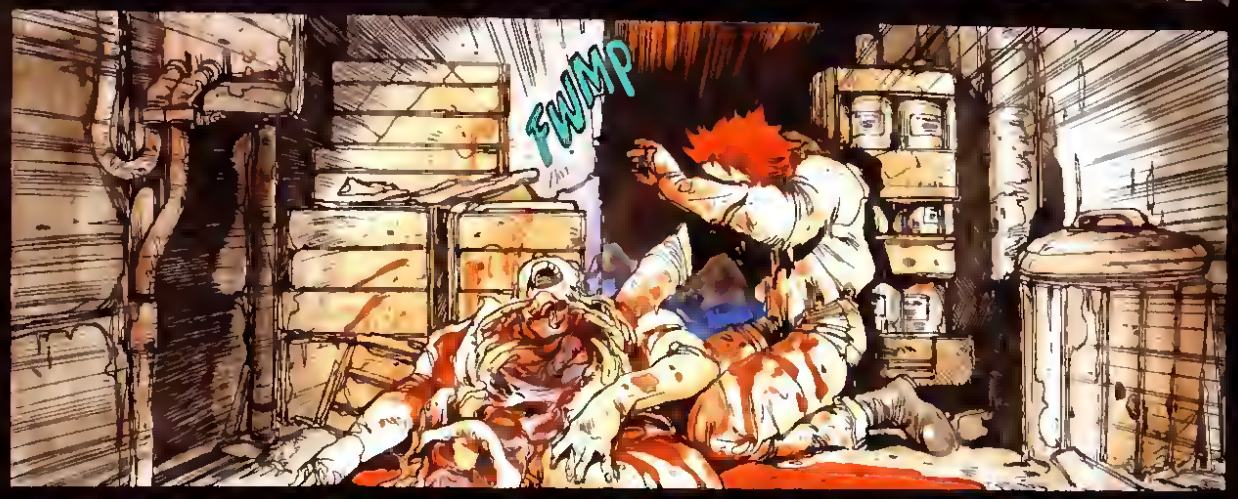
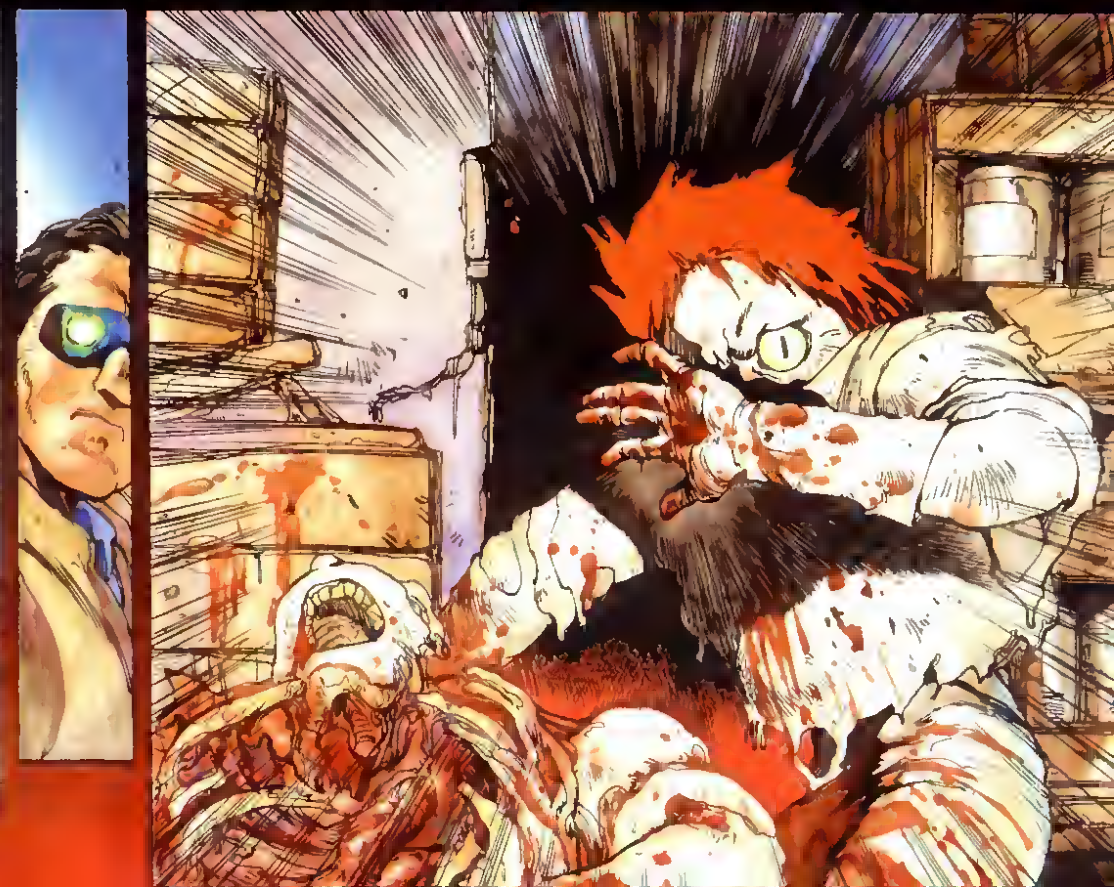
WHUP WHUP WHUP
WHUP
POLICE
POLICE
SHH!
BUT MA, THOSE COPS GOT--
I'M KINDA WONDERING ABOUT SOMETHING, MAJOR...
WHAT?
POLICE! CLEAR THE STREET!
YOU-- COVER THE BACK!
SHINJUKU POLICE
ROUNDING UP WHACKED-OUT ROBOTS IS A JOB FOR THE COPS, NOT US.
ARE WE SUPPOSED TO HELP MAKE THE PUBLIC SECURITY BUREAU LOOK GOOD JUST BECAUSE THERE'S AN ELECTION COMING UP?

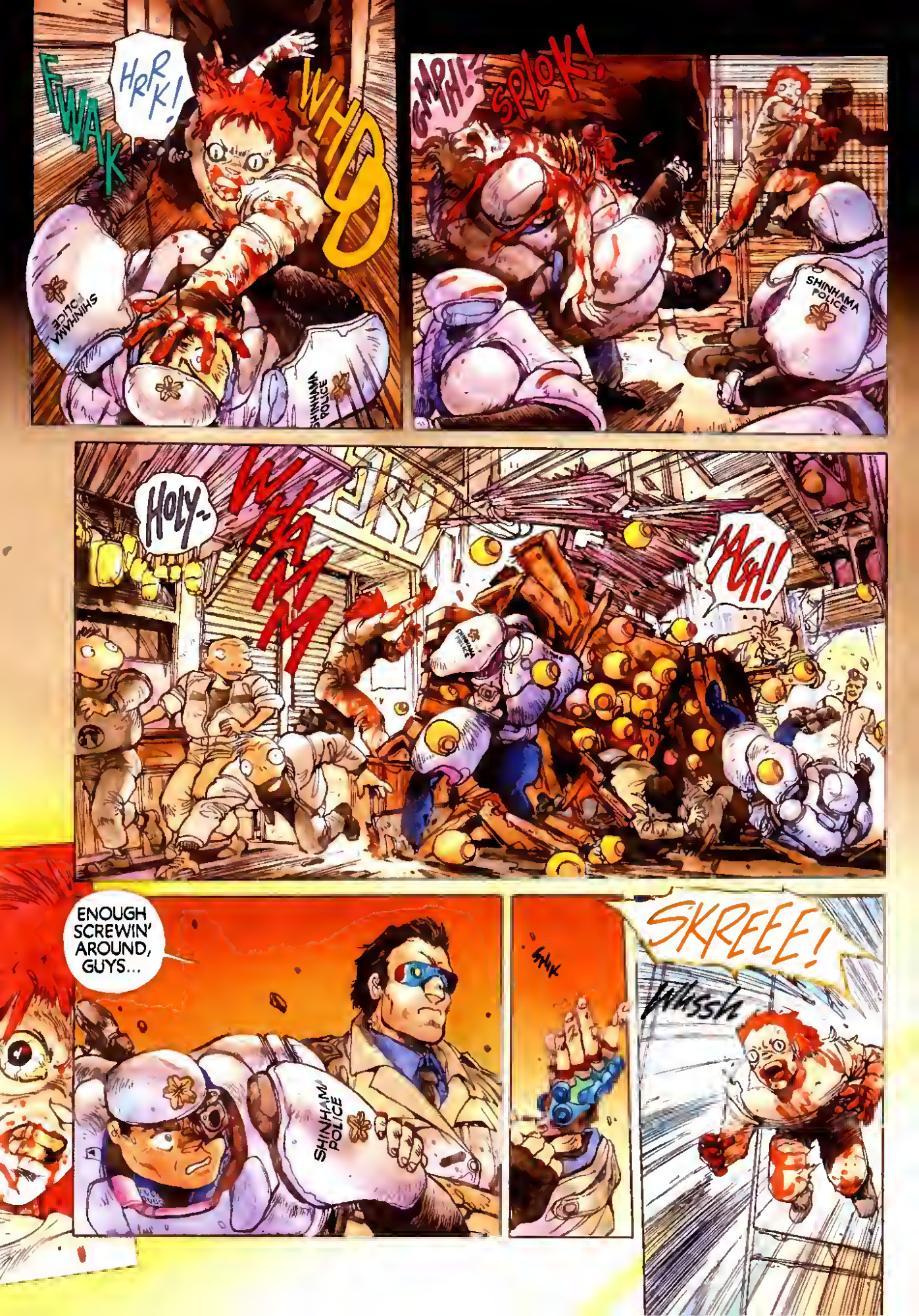

THAT GODDAMN APE-FACE ARAMAKI. Y'THINK THE MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS PAID HIM OFF?
WE'RE ONLY AFTER *TOMLIAND* PROTOTYPES MADE BY HANKA PRECISION INSTRUMENTS. ANY OTHER ASSORTED JUNK IS FOR THE COPS TO COLLECT...

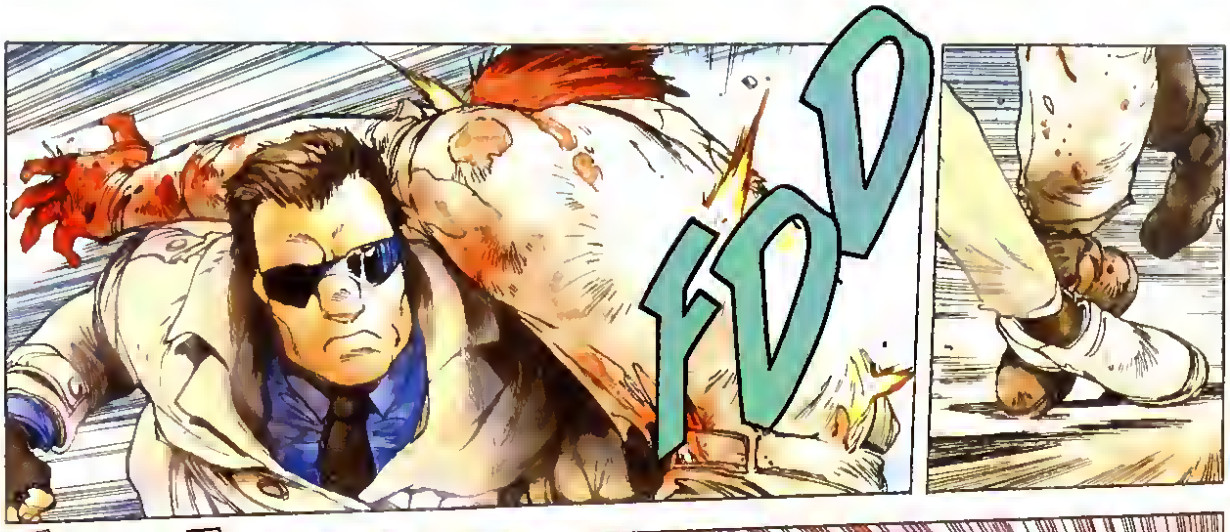
SPRK SPORT SUB

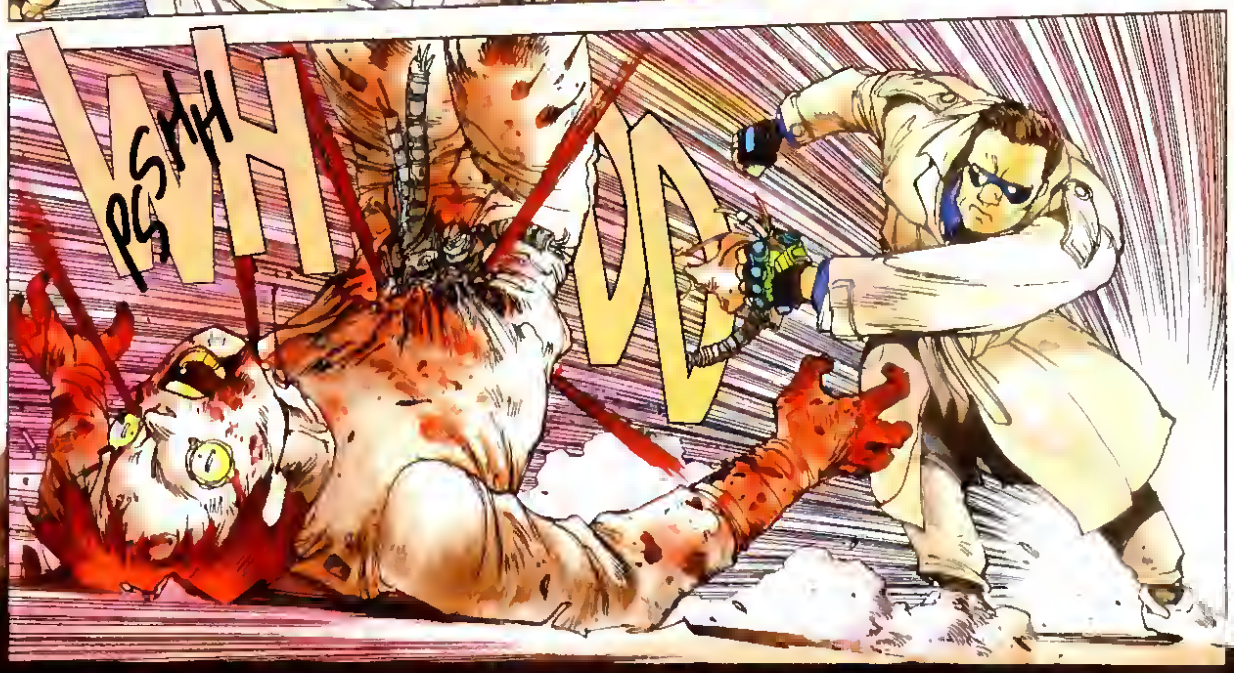

FWMP

I...
I FOUND IT!




FWAK
HRRK!
WHOB
SHINHAMA POLICE
GRRGH!
SPLOK!
SHINHAMA POLICE
HOLY-
WHAMM
AAGH!
ENOUGH SCREWIN' AROUND, GUYS...
SHINHAMA POLICE
GRAK
SKREEE!
WHSSH

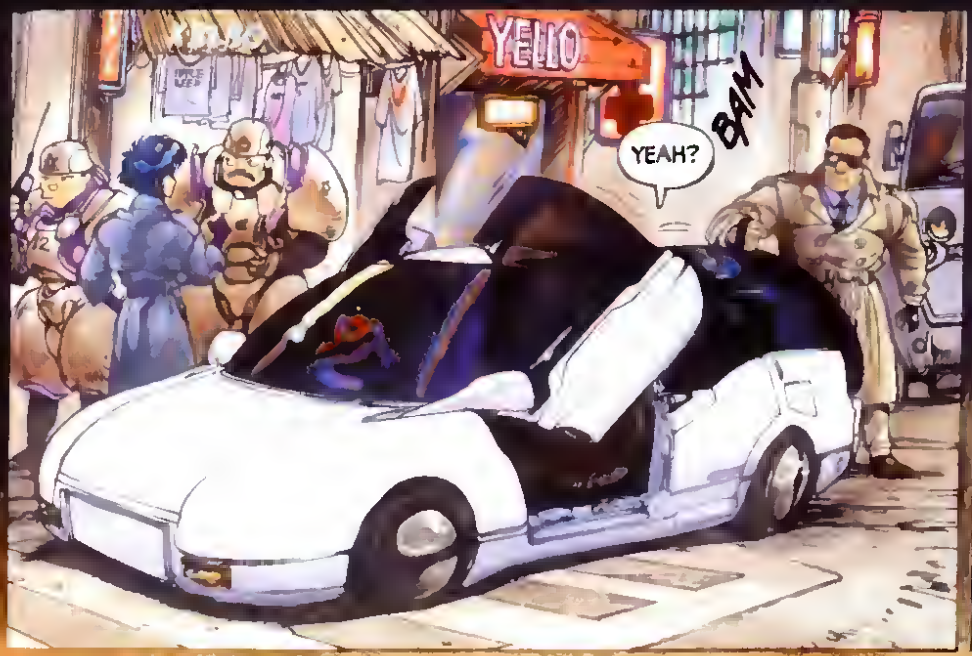

FDD


PSHH
VH
DD

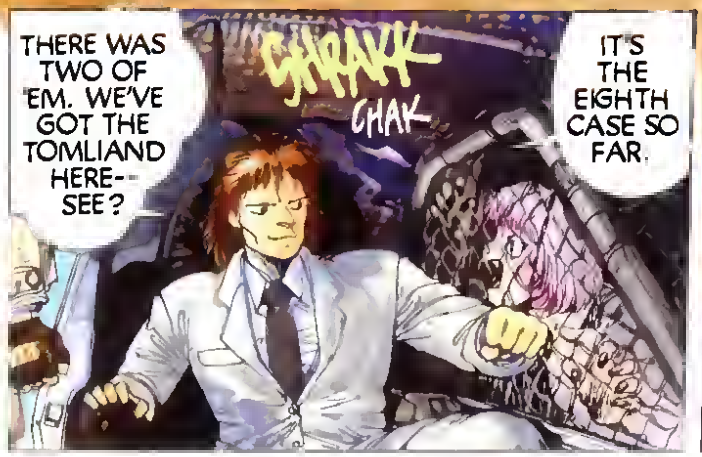
PSSHHH
VREEEEE

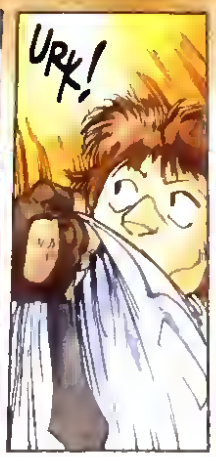
WELL, SHIT-- THIS AIN'T EVEN A TOMLIAND...
!

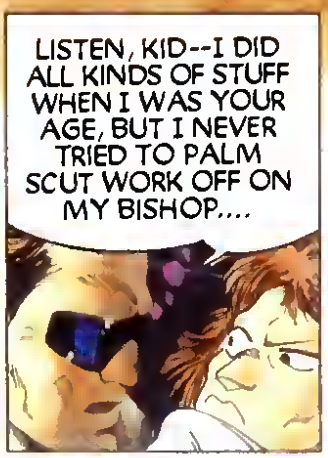
WASTE A GOD-DAMN EFFORT...


YELLO
YEAH?
BAM

SO WHAT'S THE STORY?


THERE WAS TWO OF 'EM. WE'VE GOT THE TOMLIAND HERE-- SEE?
GHRAKK
CHAK
IT'S THE EIGHTH CASE SO FAR.


URK!


LISTEN, KID--I DID ALL KINDS OF STUFF WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE, BUT I NEVER TRIED TO PALM SCUT WORK OFF ON MY BISHOP....

HEY, THE SENIORITY SYSTEM'S OUT OF FASHION THESE DAYS, BATOU...

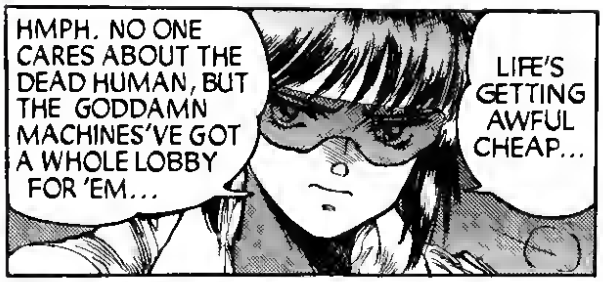
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK, YOU'RE ABOUT TO LEARN DIFFERENT, PAL--
KLIK
TOGUSA! GET THAT TOMLI'S DOCUMENTS TOGETHER AND FAX 'EM TO THE CHIEF. AND KEEP A COPY HERE, TOO.

I'M GOING TO THE PREFECTURAL POLICE HEADQUARTERS...
VREEE

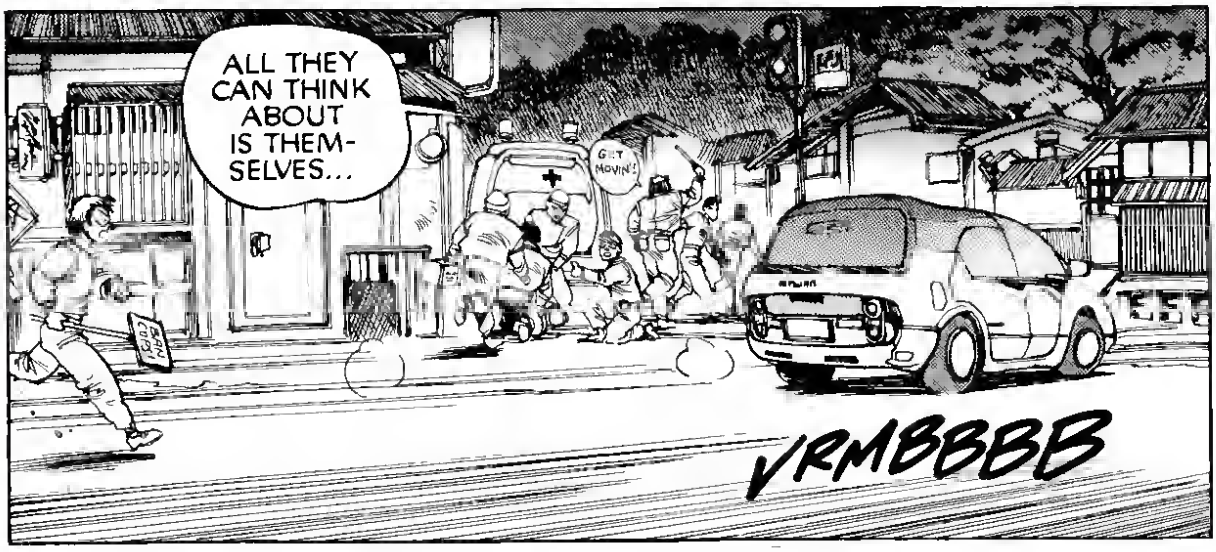
MAN, AM I PISSED...
WANNA TRANQUIL-IZE WITH SOME NEW AGE MUSIC?

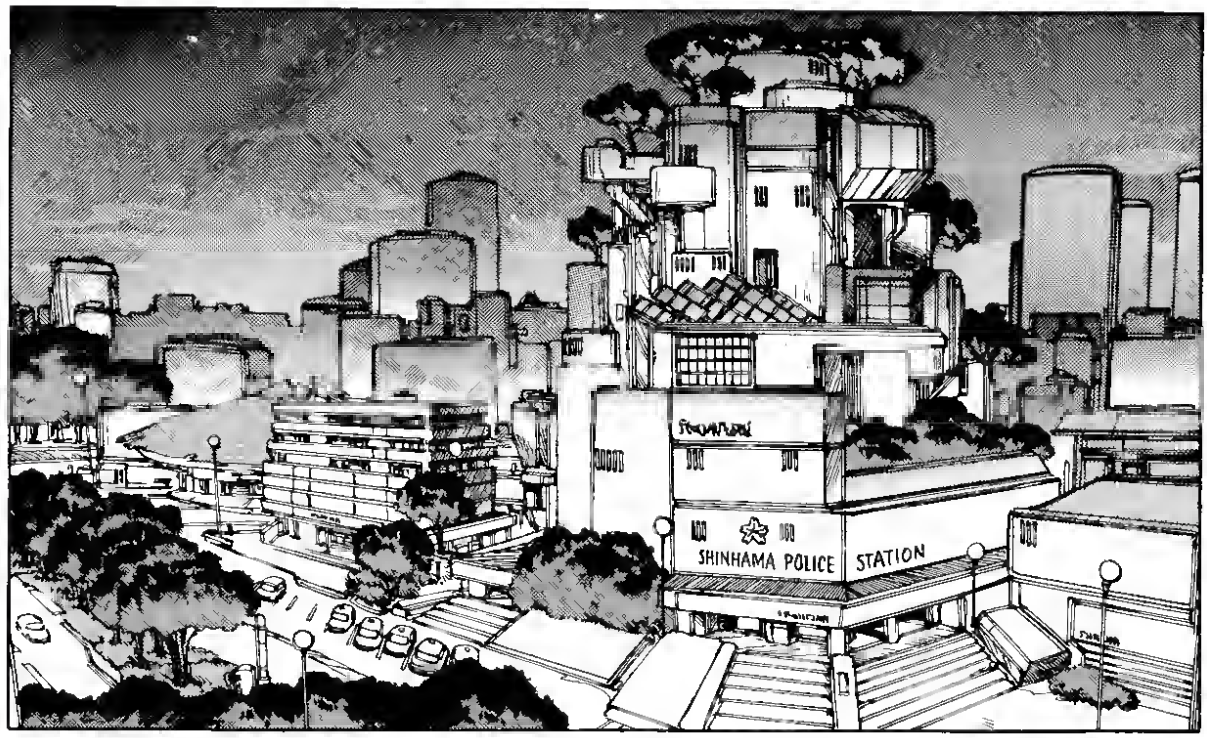
DAMN.
beep

WE AIN'T GONNA LET YOU STINKIN' PIGS GET AWAY WITH THIS STUFF!
PIGS!
YEAH!
BAM
YER IGNORIN' OUR RIGHTS!
YEAH, STOMPING ON FREEDOM AND EQUALITY!


HMPH. NO ONE CARES ABOUT THE DEAD HUMAN, BUT THE GODDAMN MACHINES'VE GOT A WHOLE LOBBY FOR 'EM...
LIFE'S GETTING AWFUL CHEAP...

AW, FORGET IT, MAJOR. NO SENSE ARGUING WITH A POPULATION EXPLOSION...
BESIDES, THESE SLIMEBALLS'D BE BEGGIN' US FOR HELP IF THEIR OWN FAMILIES GOT WHACKED...

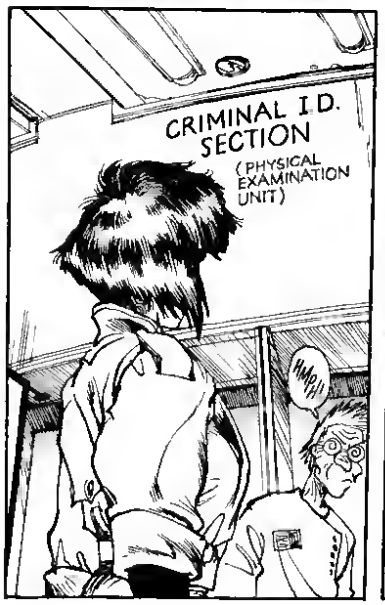

ALL THEY CAN THINK ABOUT IS THEM-SELVES...
VRMBBBB


SHINHAMA POLICE STATION

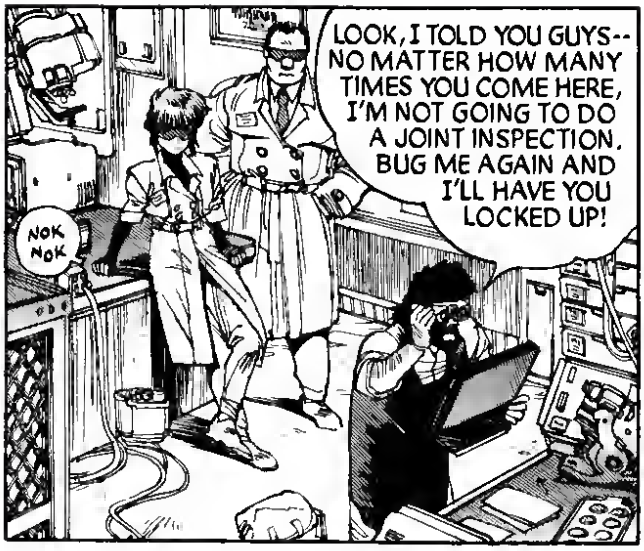
THEY SAY THEY'RE FROM THE "SPECIAL ASSAULT FORCE, *PSB* SECTION 9"... *WHAT?!*

YESSIR! *RIGHT AWAY,* SIR!

S-SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING... DOWN THAT HALL AND TO THE LEFT...
MY, AREN'T WE *POLITE,* ALL OF A SUDDEN.


CRIMINAL I.D. SECTION
(PHYSICAL EXAMINATION UNIT)
HMM!!

AFTER THIS, I WANT YOU TO POSE AS A COP AND CHECK OUT HANKA PRECISION INSTRUMENTS.
WITH *TOGUSA?* C'MON, GIVE ME SOME-THING MORE EXCITING...

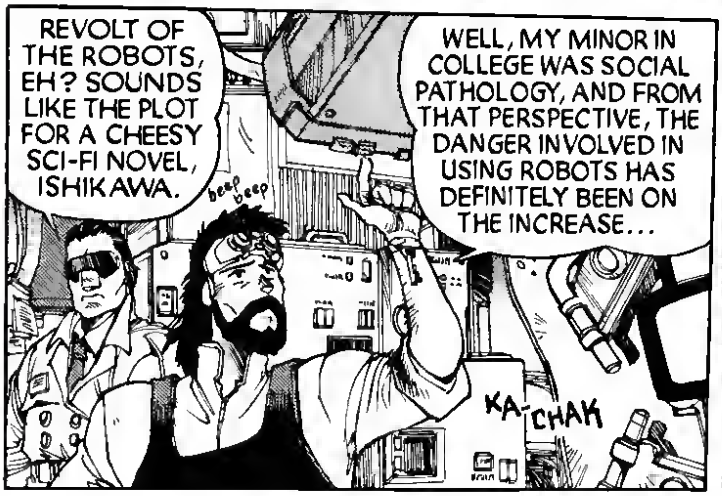

LOOK, I TOLD YOU GUYS-- NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU COME HERE, I'M NOT GOING TO DO A JOINT INSPECTION. BUG ME AGAIN AND I'LL HAVE YOU LOCKED UP!
NOK NOK

THE STAFF HERE ALL LIKE YOUR JOKES, *ISHIKAWA?*

WHAT? OH, SORRY!
I THOUGHT IT WAS THOSE IDIOTS FROM THE ROBOT FACTORY AGAIN...
SURVEY REPORT

SECTION 9? THIS IS BATOU. GIVE ME EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT ON ROBOT-RELATED INCIDENTS...
99% OF THE WORK IS ACCIDENT RELATED. THE REST IS MICROORGANISM DAMAGE, OR PROBLEMS RELATED TO CYBERBRAINS, JOINT ENGINEERING, OR BASIC MATERIALS...

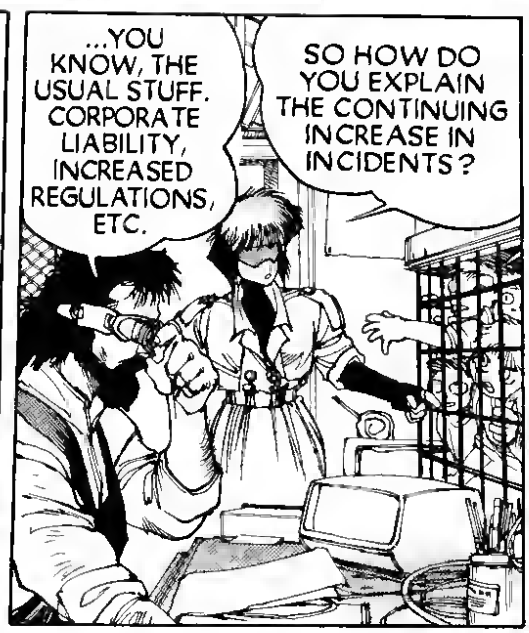
IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, YOU CAN SEE THERE'S BEEN A PARTICULAR INCREASE IN UNITS SELF-DESTRUCTING...
SEEMS LIKE THE ROBOTS ARE GIVING THEMSELVES "PERMISSION" TO ATTACK HUMANS BY CREATING THEIR OWN "BREAKDOWNS."


REVOLT OF THE ROBOTS, EH? SOUNDS LIKE THE PLOT FOR A CHEESY SCI-FI NOVEL, ISHIKAWA.
WELL, MY MINOR IN COLLEGE WAS SOCIAL PATHOLOGY, AND FROM THAT PERSPECTIVE, THE DANGER INVOLVED IN USING ROBOTS HAS DEFINITELY BEEN ON THE INCREASE...
beep beep
KA-CHAK

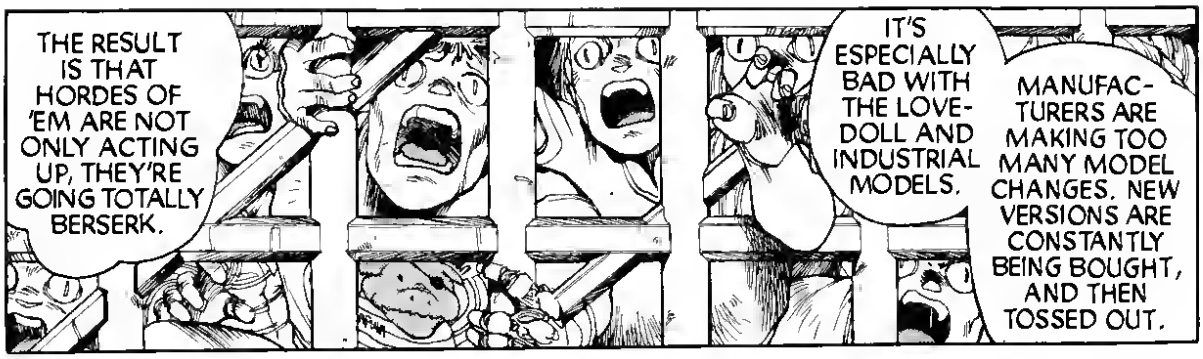
INCIDENTS HAVE REALLY INCREASED THAT MUCH?
TAKE A LOOK FOR YOURSELF...

SKREE
SKREE
SKREE

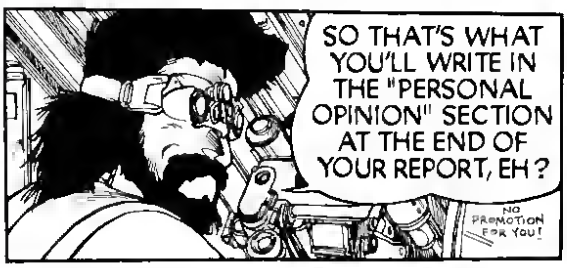
YOU THINK SOMEBODY MIGHT BE TELLING 'EM TO BREAK DOWN AND ATTACK HUMANS?
THAT WAS TRUE OF FOUR CASES... WE SOLVED 'EM USING THE "GRUDGE THEORY"...

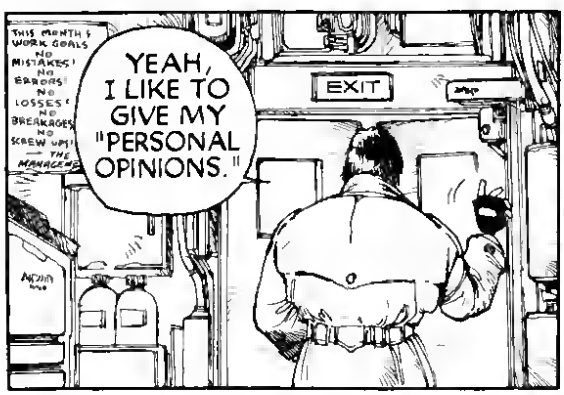

...YOU KNOW, THE USUAL STUFF. CORPORATE LIABILITY, INCREASED REGULATIONS, ETC.
SO HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THE CONTINUING INCREASE IN INCIDENTS?

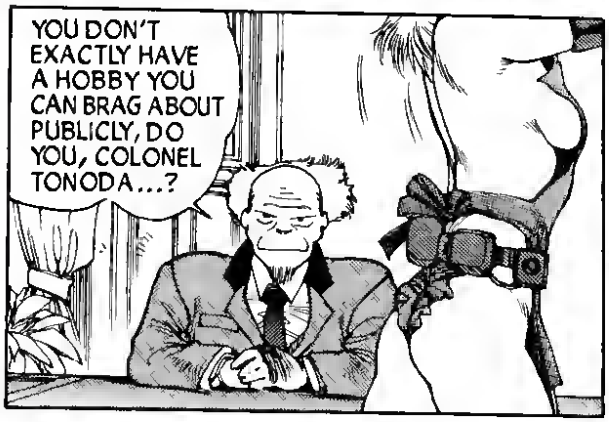
IT'S BECAUSE THE ROBOTS ARE BEING SCRAPPED...
...WHEN THEY'RE NOT NEEDED ANY-MORE.

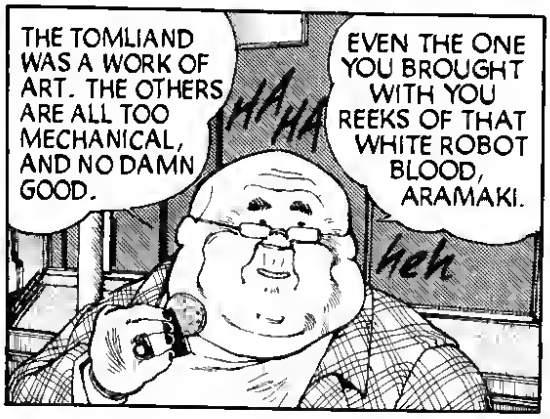


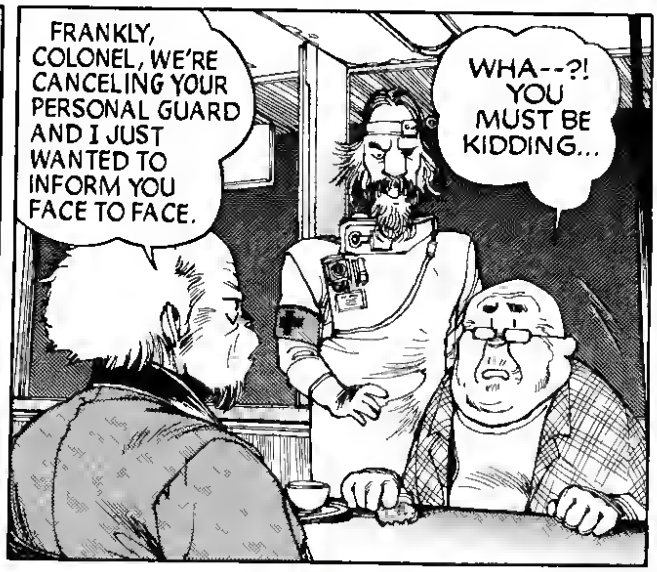
WOULDN'T WORK. TOO EXPENSIVE AND CONFLICTS WITH PLANNED OBSOLESCENCE





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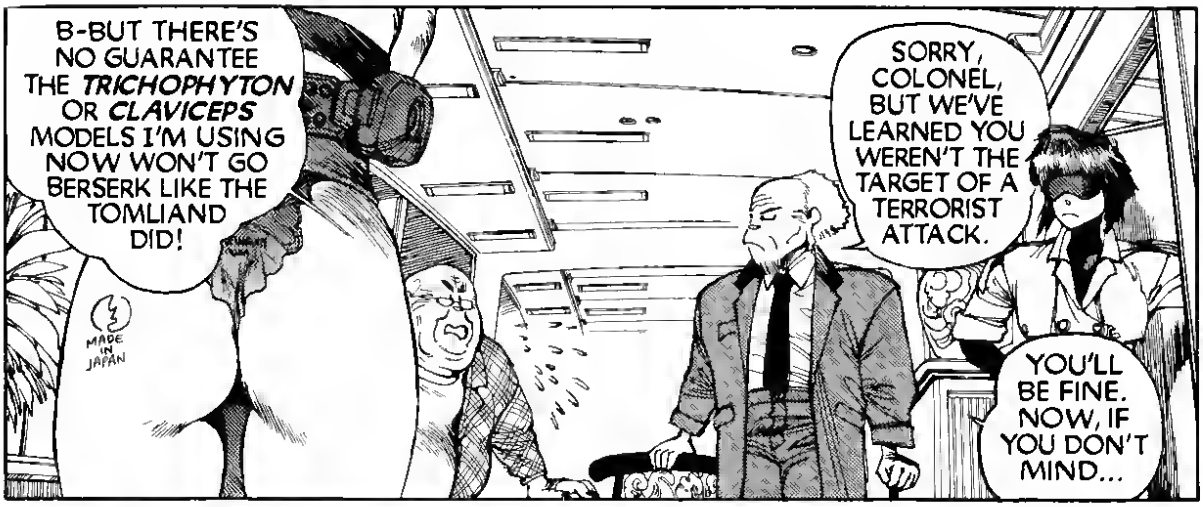
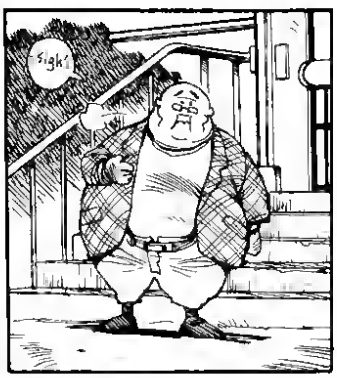
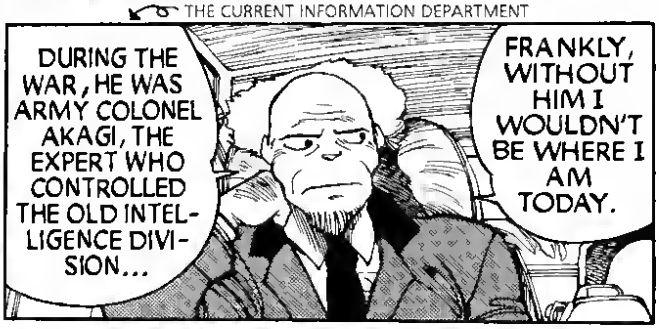
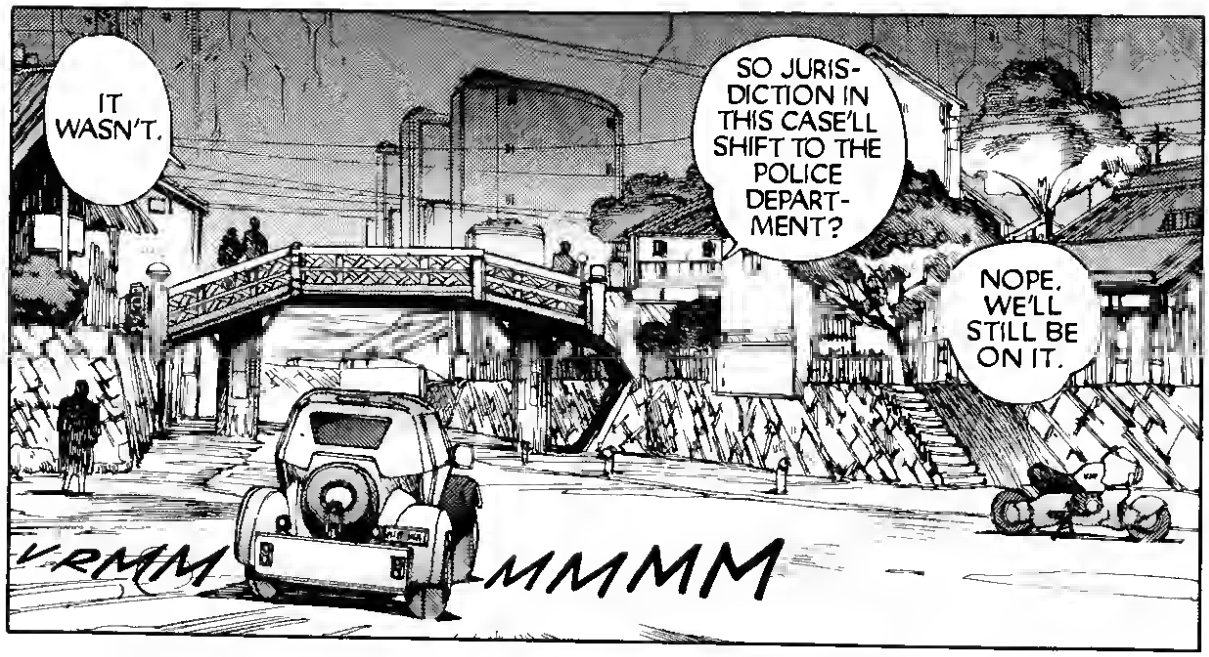


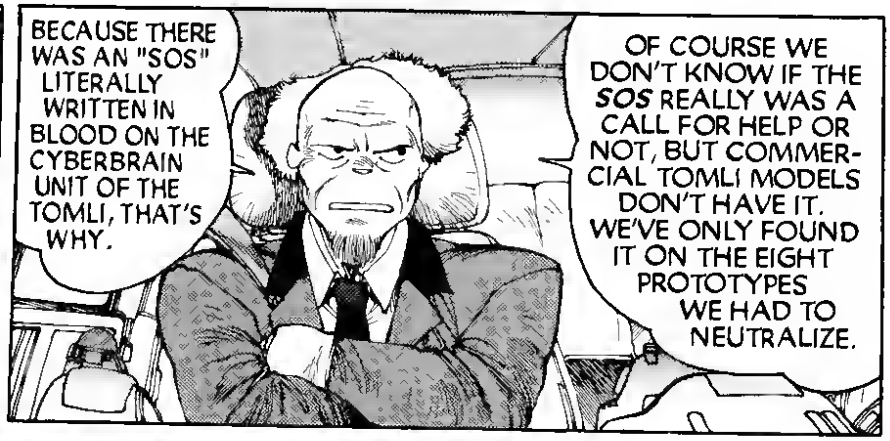



THE CURRENT INFORMATION DEPARTMENT




IT WASN'T.
SO JURISDICTION IN THIS CASE'LL SHIFT TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT?
NOPE. WE'LL STILL BE ON IT.
VRMM
MMMM

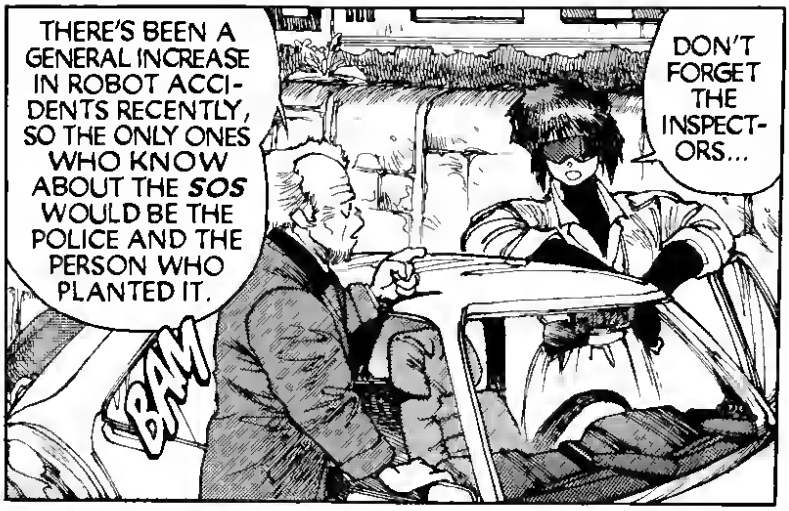
AND WHY'S THAT?


BECAUSE THERE WAS AN "SOS" LITERALLY WRITTEN IN BLOOD ON THE CYBERBRAIN UNIT OF THE TOMLI, THAT'S WHY.
OF COURSE WE DON'T KNOW IF THE *SOS* REALLY WAS A CALL FOR HELP OR NOT, BUT COMMERCIAL TOMLI MODELS DON'T HAVE IT. WE'VE ONLY FOUND IT ON THE EIGHT PROTOTYPES WE HAD TO NEUTRALIZE.

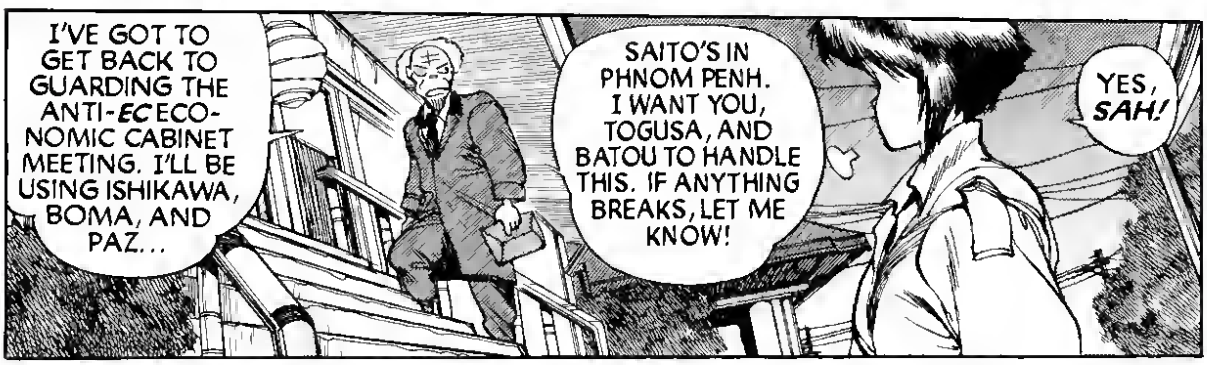
SO THAT'S WHY YOU PUT THE COLONEL UNDER A TWENTY-FOUR-HOUR WATCH, AND BUGGED HIS PLACE, TOO.

SKREEK

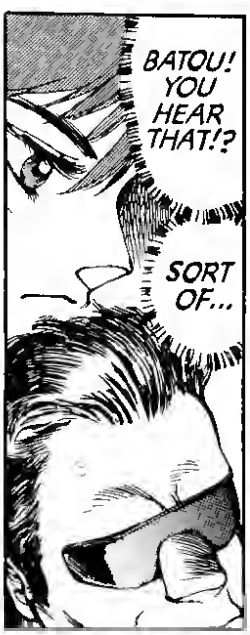
SO, THE PERSON WE'RE LOOKING FOR MADE EIGHT TOMLIS GO BERSERK TO SEND AN *SOS* TO THE POLICE...

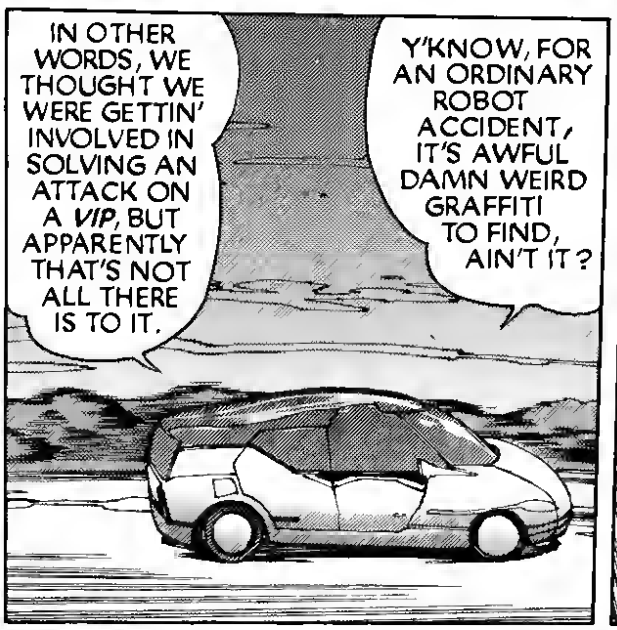

THERE'S BEEN A GENERAL INCREASE IN ROBOT ACCIDENTS RECENTLY, SO THE ONLY ONES WHO KNOW ABOUT THE *SOS* WOULD BE THE POLICE AND THE PERSON WHO PLANTED IT.
DON'T FORGET THE INSPECTORS...
PAM

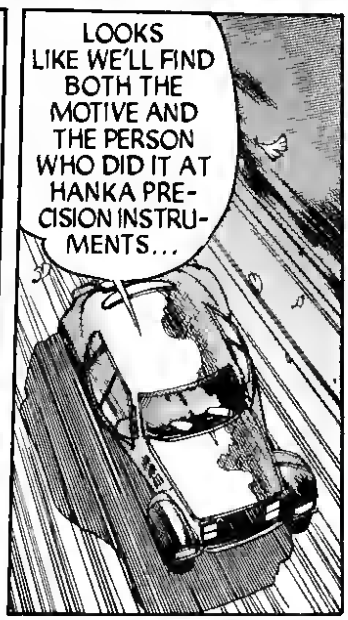
THE SHIPPING INSPECTOR AT HANKA PRECISION INSTRUMENTS -- THE TOMILAND SUBCONTRACTOR -- MUST'VE KNOWN ABOUT THE *SOS* MARK, TOO...


I'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO GUARDING THE ANTI-*EC* ECONOMIC CABINET MEETING. I'LL BE USING ISHIKAWA, BOMA, AND PAZ...
SAITO'S IN PHNOM PENH. I WANT YOU, TOGUSA, AND BATOU TO HANDLE THIS. IF ANYTHING BREAKS, LET ME KNOW!
YES, *SAH!*

AND NO LONE RANGER STUFF, UNDERSTAND?!
CHIEF! TO EVEN *THINK* I WOULD!!

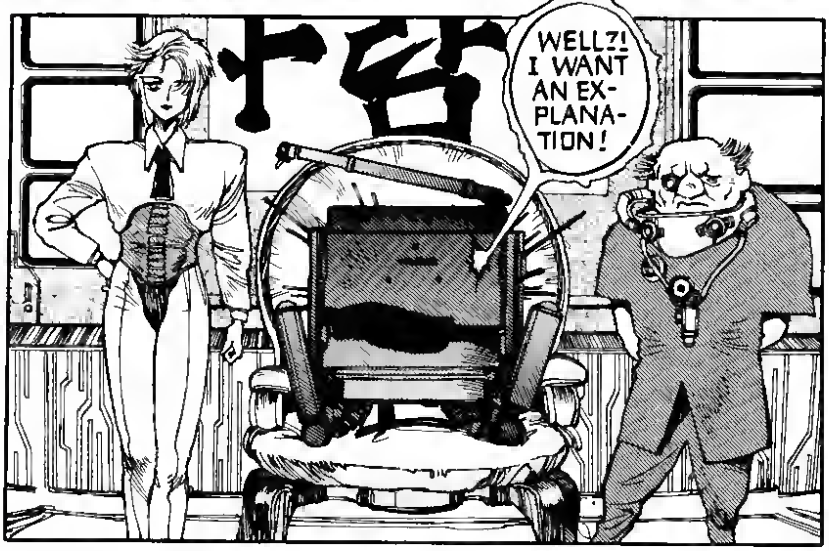

*BATOU! YOU HEAR THAT!?*
*SORT OF...*


IN OTHER WORDS, WE THOUGHT WE WERE GETTIN' INVOLVED IN SOLVING AN ATTACK ON A *VIP*, BUT APPARENTLY THAT'S NOT ALL THERE IS TO IT.
Y'KNOW, FOR AN ORDINARY ROBOT ACCIDENT, IT'S AWFUL DAMN WEIRD GRAFFITI TO FIND, AIN'T IT?

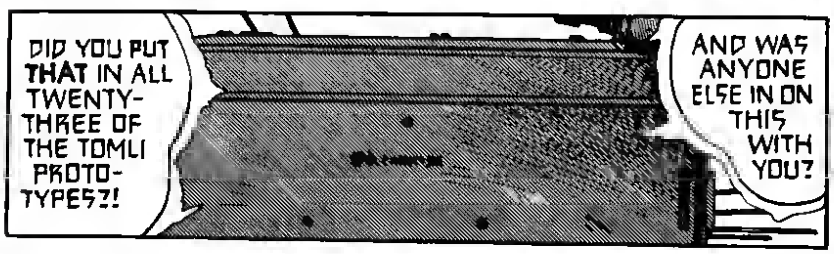

LOOKS LIKE WE'LL FIND BOTH THE MOTIVE AND THE PERSON WHO DID IT AT HANKA PRECISION INSTRUMENTS...

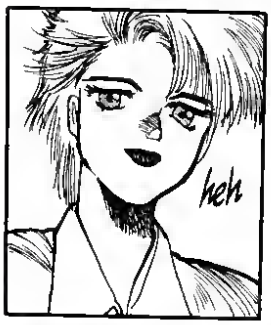
KUBONUMA! YOU'RE THE GOLD SHIFT SHIPPING INSPECTOR, YES?!

Y... YES, BOSS...

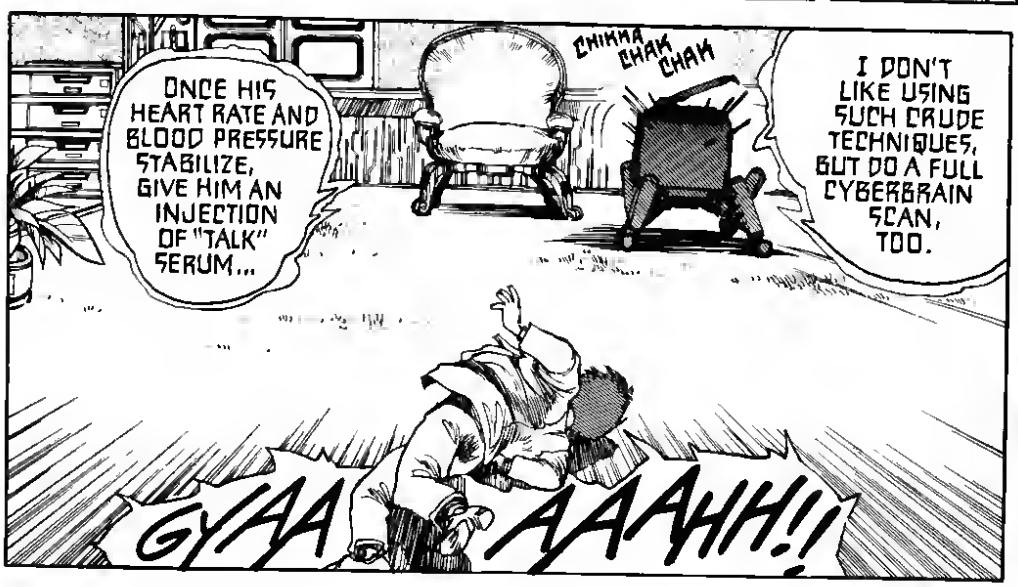

WELL?! I WANT AN EX-PLANA-TION!

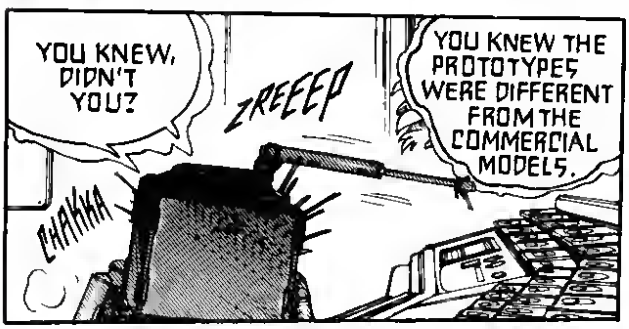
W... WAS THERE SOME COMPLAINT ABOUT MY INSPECTIONS, SIR? WH... WHAT DID I DO?!

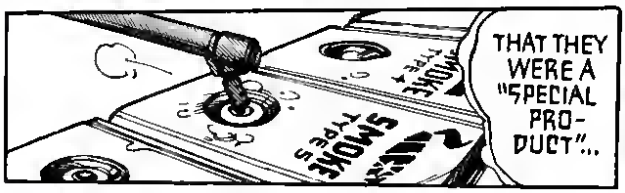

DID YOU PUT THAT IN ALL TWENTY-THREE OF THE TOMLI PROTO-TYPES?!
AND WAS ANYONE ELSE IN ON THIS WITH YOU?

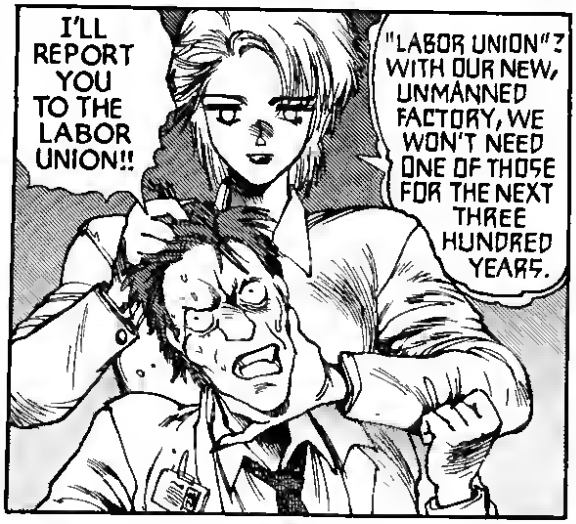

heh

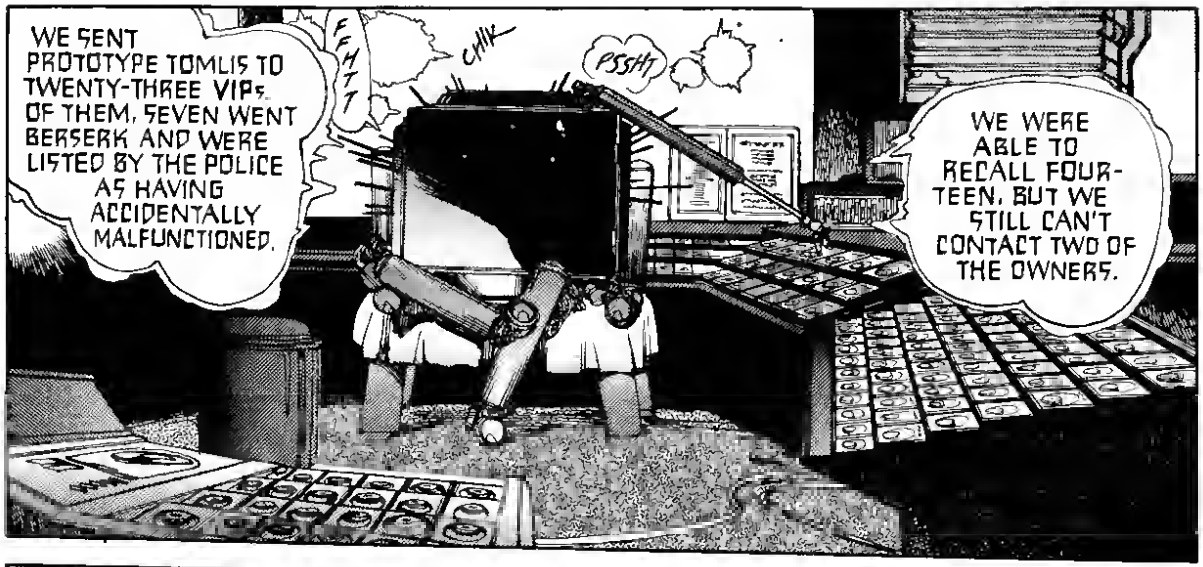
HHK!

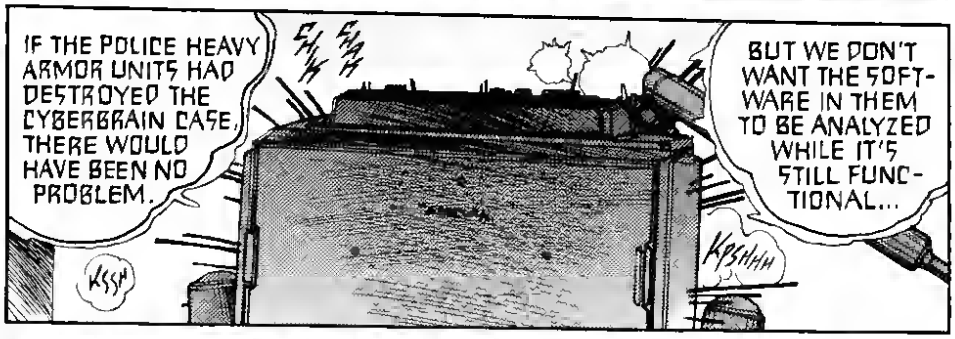

ONCE HIS HEART RATE AND BLOOD PRESSURE STABILIZE, GIVE HIM AN INJECTION OF "TALK" SERUM...
CHIKKA CHAK CHAK
I DON'T LIKE USING SUCH CRUDE TECHNIQUES, BUT DO A FULL CYBERBRAIN SCAN, TOO.
GYAA AAAHH!!

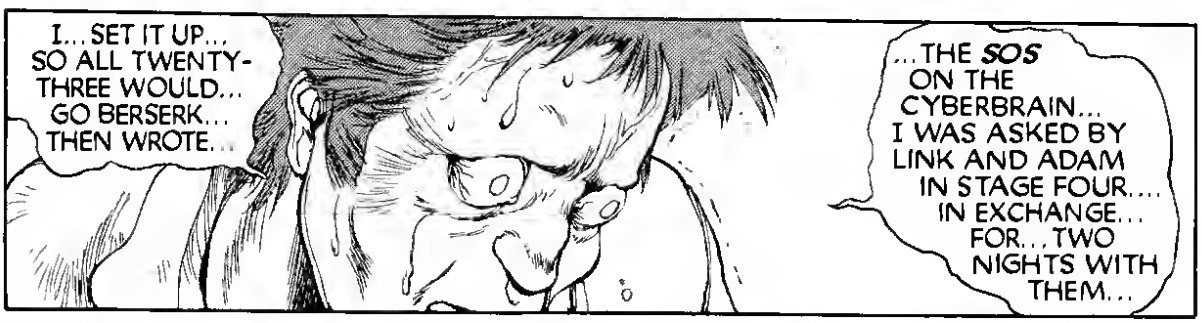

YOU KNEW, DIDN'T YOU?
ZREEEP
CHAKKA
YOU KNEW THE PROTOTYPES WERE DIFFERENT FROM THE COMMERCIAL MODELS.

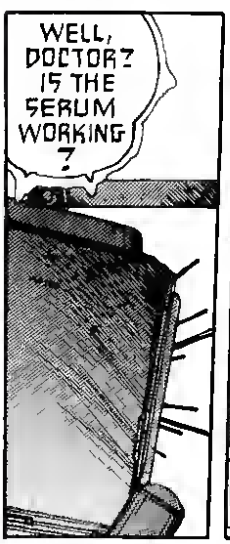

SMOKE TYPE 5
THAT THEY WERE A "SPECIAL PRO-DUCT"...


I'LL REPORT YOU TO THE LABOR UNION!!
"LABOR UNION"? WITH OUR NEW, UNMANNED FACTORY, WE WON'T NEED ONE OF THOSE FOR THE NEXT THREE HUNDRED YEARS.

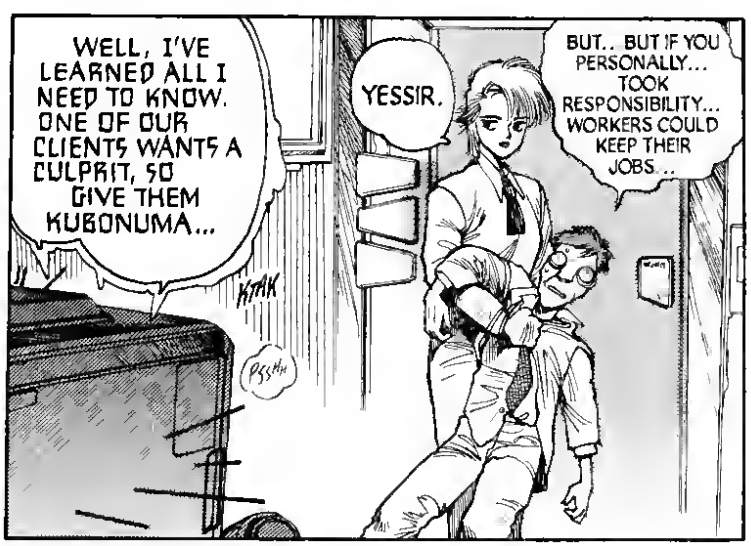

WE SENT PROTOTYPE TOMLIS TO TWENTY-THREE VIPs. OF THEM, SEVEN WENT BERSERK AND WERE LISTED BY THE POLICE AS HAVING ACCIDENTALLY MALFUNCTIONED.
FHTT
CHIK
PSSHT
WE WERE ABLE TO RECALL FOURTEEN, BUT WE STILL CAN'T CONTACT TWO OF THE OWNERS.

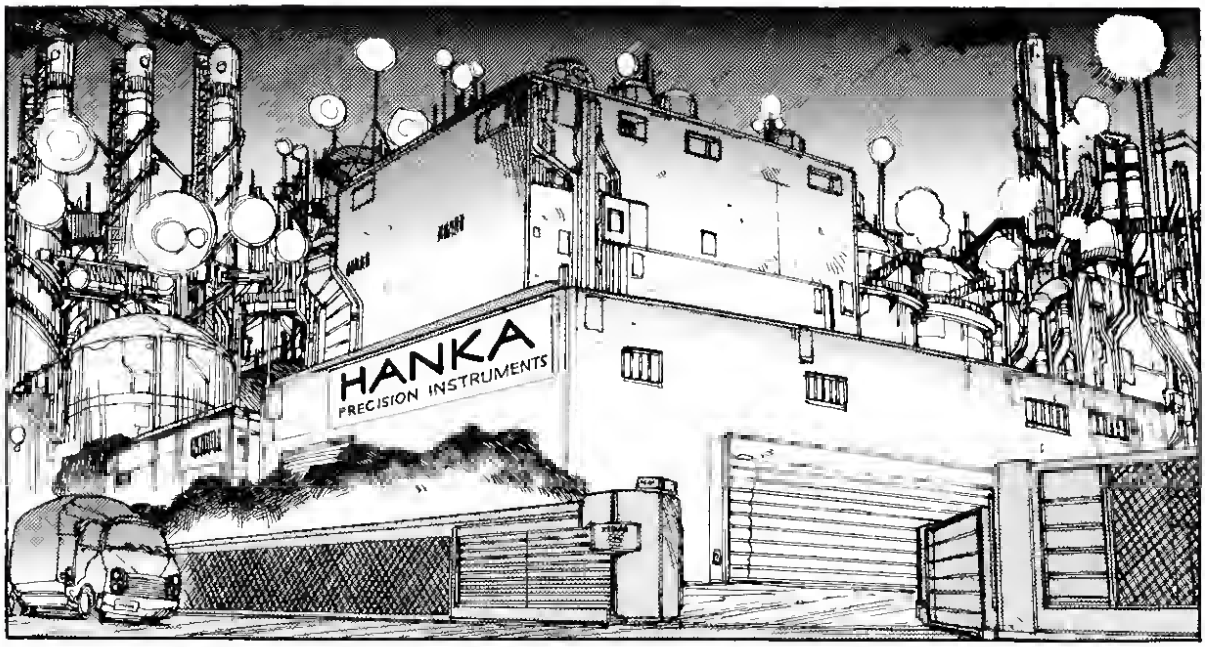

IF THE POLICE HEAVY ARMOR UNITS HAD DESTROYED THE CYBERBRAIN CASE, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO PROBLEM.
KSSH
FHH
BUT WE DON'T WANT THE SOFTWARE IN THEM TO BE ANALYZED WHILE IT'S STILL FUNCTIONAL...
KPSHHH

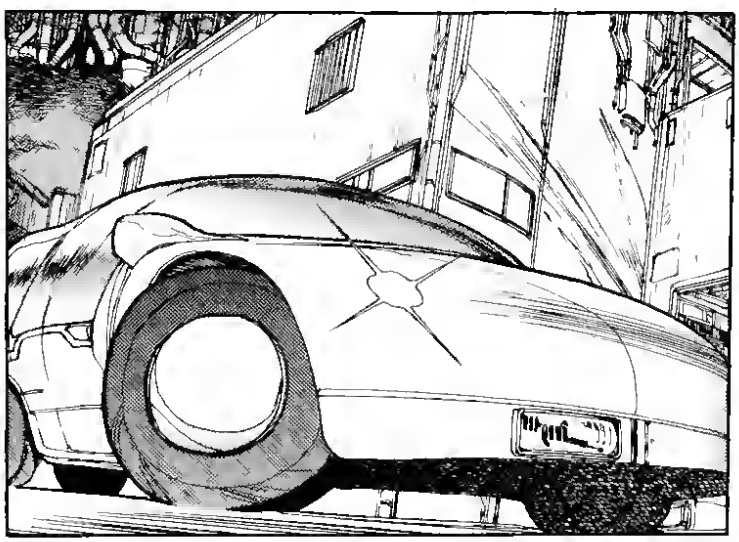

I... SET IT UP... SO ALL TWENTY-THREE WOULD... GO BERSERK... THEN WROTE...
...THE *SOS* ON THE CYBERBRAIN... I WAS ASKED BY LINK AND ADAM IN STAGE FOUR.... IN EXCHANGE... FOR... TWO NIGHTS WITH THEM...

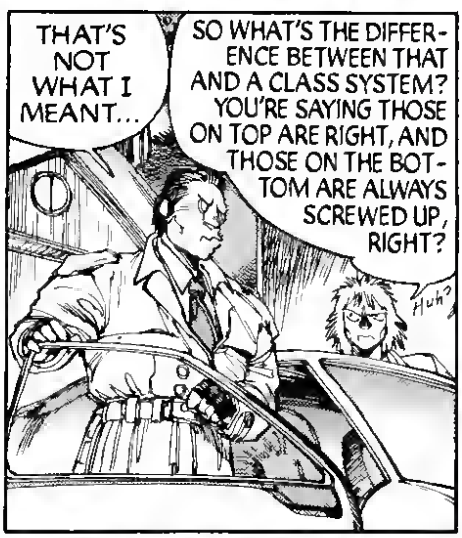

WELL, DOCTOR? IS THE SERUM WORKING?

YESSIR. WITH FULL EFFECT.


WELL, I'VE LEARNED ALL I NEED TO KNOW. ONE OF OUR CLIENTS WANTS A CULPRIT, SO GIVE THEM KUBONUMA...
KTAK
PSSHH
YESSIR.
BUT.. BUT IF YOU PERSONALLY... TOOK RESPONSIBILITY... WORKERS COULD KEEP THEIR JOBS...


HANKA
PRECISION INSTRUMENTS

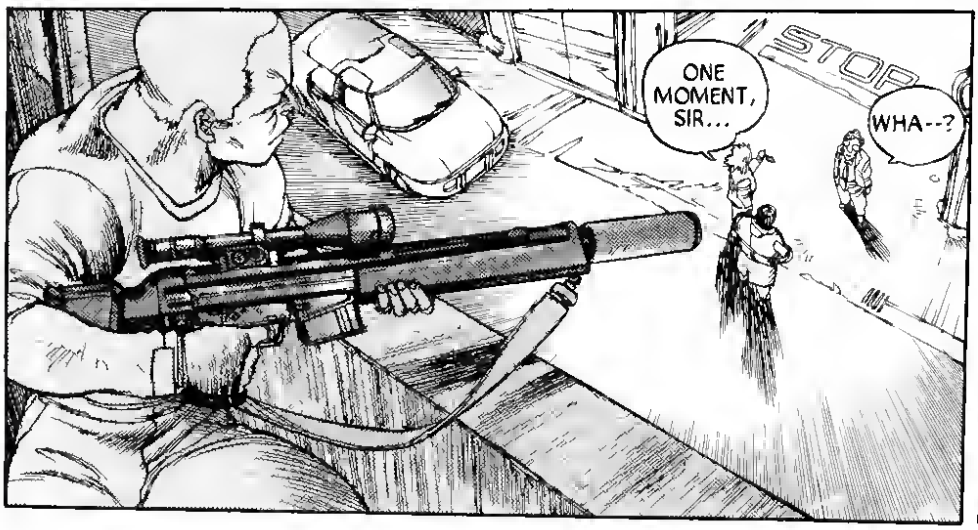



THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT...
SO WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THAT AND A CLASS SYSTEM? YOU'RE SAYING THOSE ON TOP ARE RIGHT, AND THOSE ON THE BOTTOM ARE ALWAYS SCREWED UP, RIGHT?
Huh?

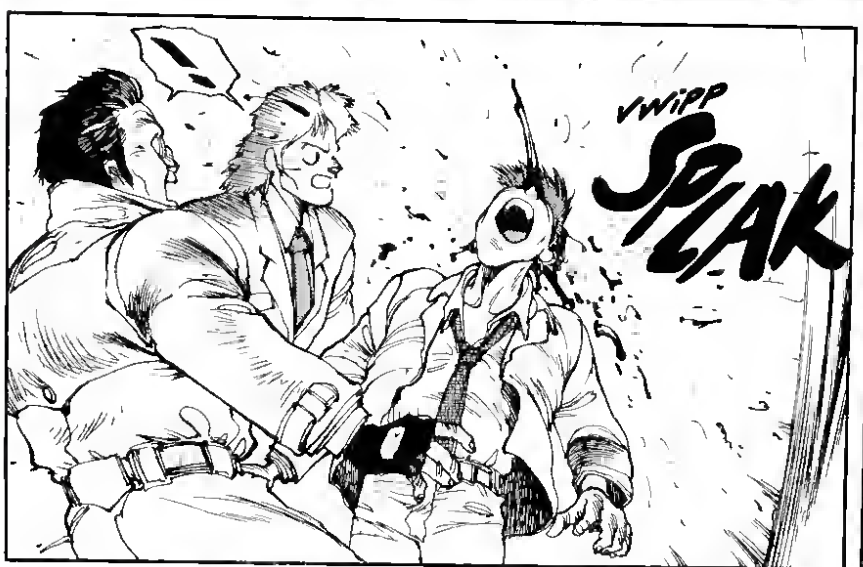
EVEN A MONKEY KNOWS HOW TO BE POLITE, TOGUSA...
SHIT... FEEL LIKE I'M A COP AGAIN.
BAM

EH?

HEY... HIS BADGE SAYS HE'S A "SHIPPING INSPECTOR"...
LOOKS LIKE HE COULDN'T INSPECT HIS OWN DICK RIGHT NOW...


ONE MOMENT, SIR...
WHA--?

UH...

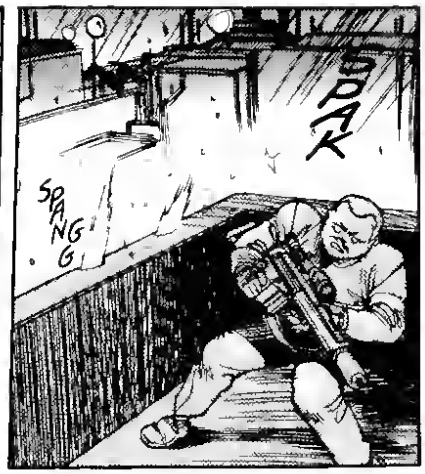

VWIPP
SPLAK

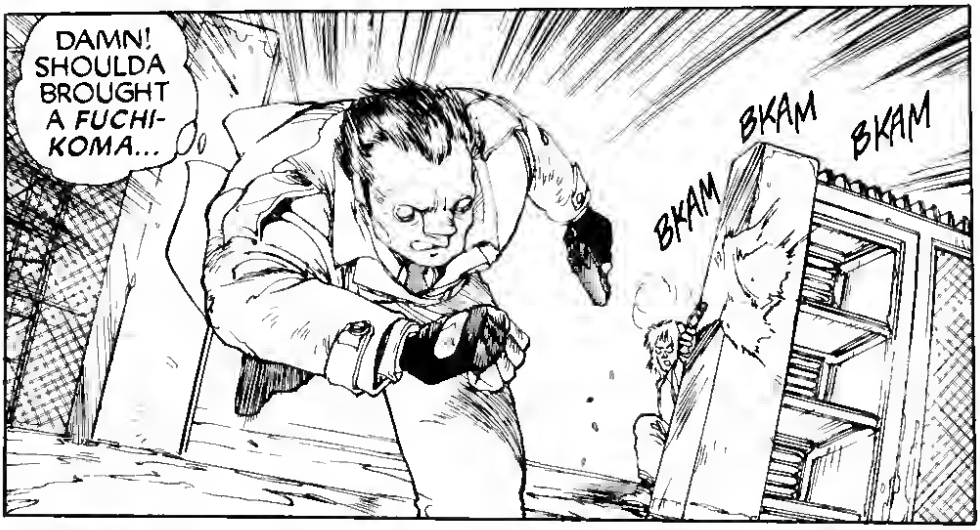
YCHIK
TOGUSA! YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO TAKE POINT!

SPAK
SPAK

SKSSH

SOMEONE'S GOT SOME BALLS TO OPEN UP LIKE THAT...
BKAM BKAM
BKAM BKAM
SPAK


SPAK
SPANG


DAMN! SHOULDA BROUGHT A *FUCHI-KOMA*...
BKAM
BKAM
BKAM

KANG KANG KANG KANG KANG

HE'S ON THE FIRE ESCAPE BEHIND THE BUILDING!

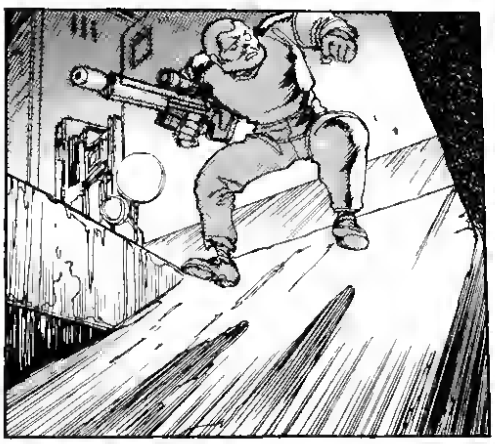
WHAT ABOUT THE BUILD-ING?
WE'LL USE THE CAR. WE DON'T NEED A BACK-UP!

YER A REAL ONE-MAN ARMY, BATOU!

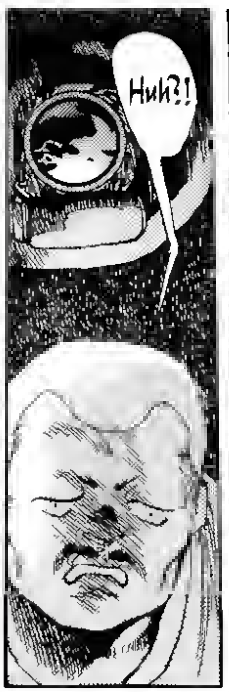
THAD
HAH!
SKRAAAAAK
FREEZE, BUDDY!!
!
!
BRTTTTT

FWDD

BRTTT
OMPH!

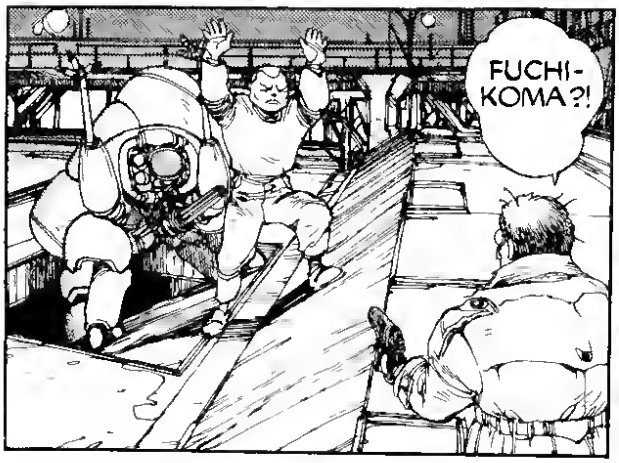


SYSSHH

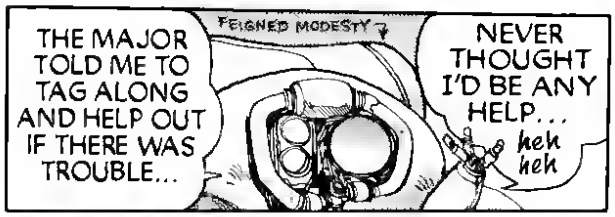

Huh?!

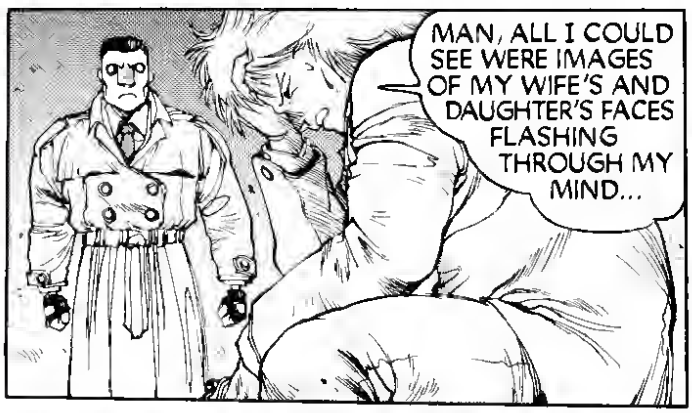
AAGH!
BLAM BLAM

ANY TROUBLE AND YER DEAD MEAT! COME OUT WITH BOTH HANDS UP, ASSHOLE!

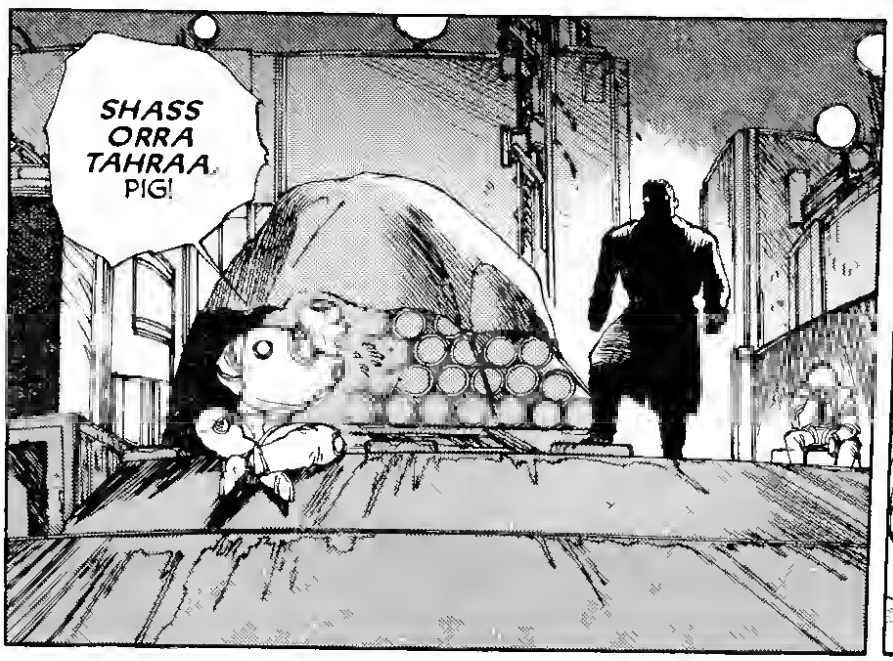

FUCHI-KOMA?!

WELL, GOOD WORK. NOW CHECK OUR PERIMETER-- THIS GUY MAY HAVE SOME PALS AROUND. START WITH PHONE BOOTHS AND CARS IN THE AREA.


THE MAJOR TOLD ME TO TAG ALONG AND HELP OUT IF THERE WAS TROUBLE...
FEIGNED MODESTY
NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE ANY HELP... heh heh


MAN, ALL I COULD SEE WERE IMAGES OF MY WIFE'S AND DAUGHTER'S FACES FLASHING THROUGH MY MIND...

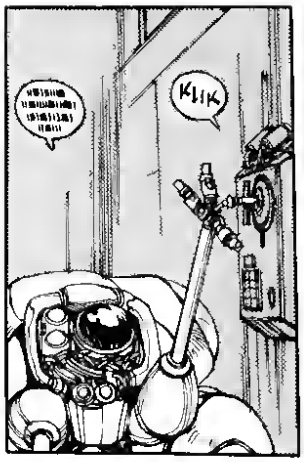
NOT YER WIFE AND KID, PAL.
THOSE WERE THE GODDESSES OF DEATH.

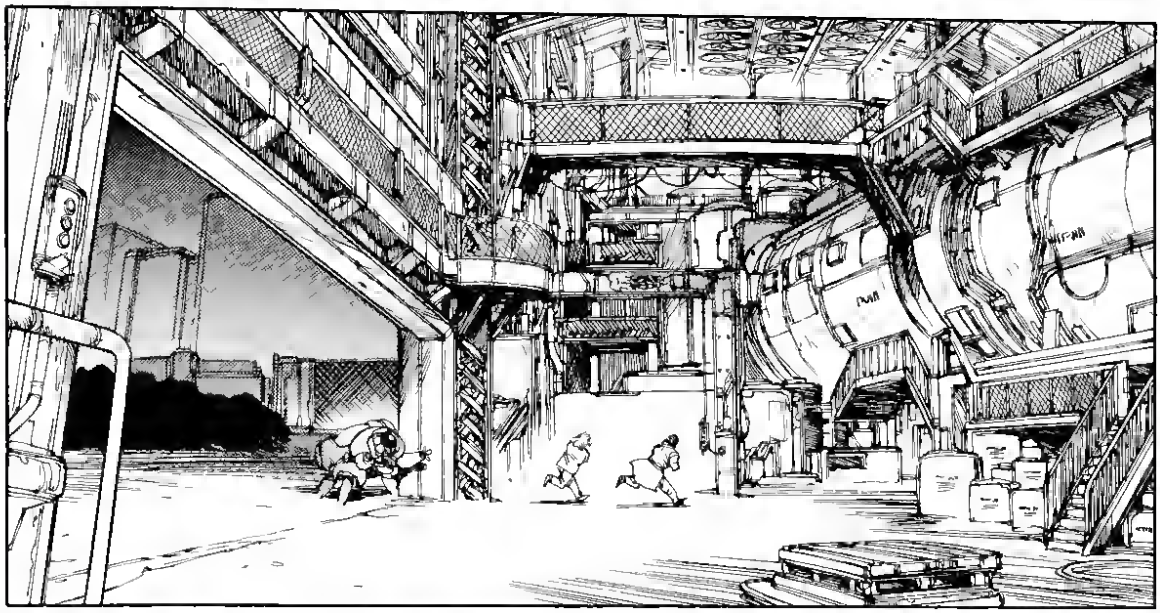

SHASS ORRA TAHRAA, PIG!

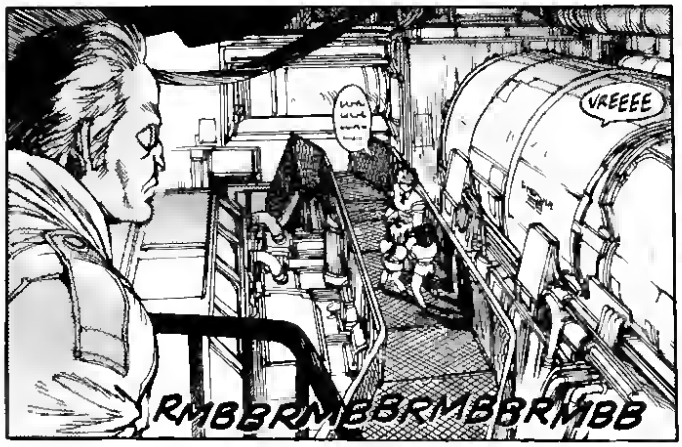
WHEN ME GET OUTTA PRISON, ME GONNA KILL YOU! JUST WAIT, PIG-MAN!

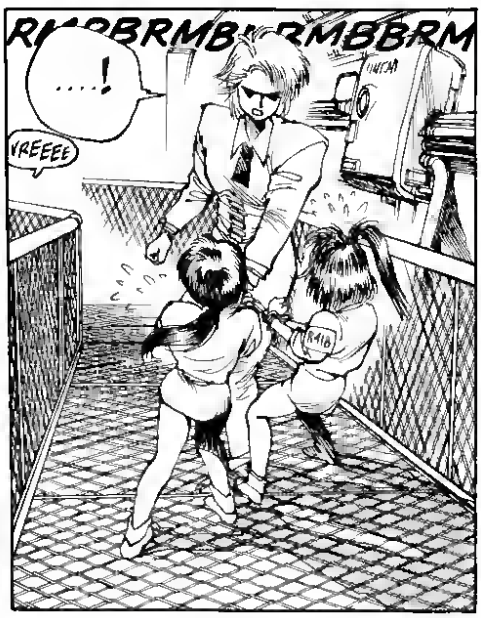
KRAK
SO... WHY'D YOU KILL THE INSPECTOR?
WHO YOU GUYS?! NOT PIG-MAN!
DURING THE WAR, YOU WERE A P.O.W. IN EITHER KHORASSAN OR BALUCHISTAN, WEREN'T YOU!?
WHUD
UMF!
SO WHAT?! EH?!
THINK YOU CAN HIDE THAT SCAR ON YOUR LIP WITH A MUS-TACHE?
YOU WERE TORTURED BY THE "DENTIST."
NO! NO! ME CALL MY LAWYER!
HEY!
YOU'LL NEVER HAVE THE CHANCE, ASSHOLE
CHUK
IT'S PROBABLY TOO MUCH PAIN FOR YOU TO STAND..
WH-CHAK
HAIEEE!
KCHUK
WAIT! WAIT! YOU STOP NOW!

YOU OKAY NOW?
YEAH...
SO WHAT'D HE SAY?
SAYS HIS GANG BOSS WAS ATTACKED BY A TOMLI, AND HE WAS GETTING REVENGE ON THE GUY WHO SET UP THE ATTACK. SAYS HANKA TOLD HIM THE INSPECTOR WAS RESPONSIBLE.
HE SAYS THOSE TOMLIS WERE DEMO MODELS HANKA ONLY GAVE TO *VERY* SPECIAL CLIENTS.
HIS BOSS WAS ONE OF THOSE "SPECIAL CLIENTS"...?!
HE SAYS THEY WERE SMUGGLING CHILDREN THROUGH THE PHILIPPINES FOR HANKA. AND THEY WERE APPARENTLY INVOLVED IN THE DRUG-SMUGGLING NET, TOO...





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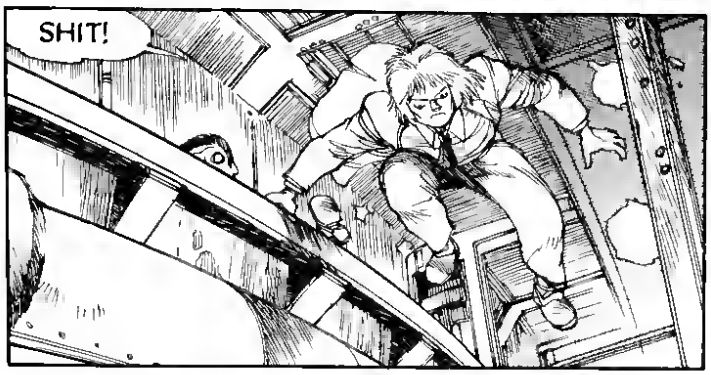
LOOK! I'LL BET THOSE KIDS CAME IN THROUGH THE PHI-LIPPINES!
MAYBE THEY'RE THE "PRODUCT".

LINK! ADAM! STOP FIGHTING ME! THE BOSS IS WAITING IN THE INVESTIGATION ROOM, SO LET'S GET--

?!

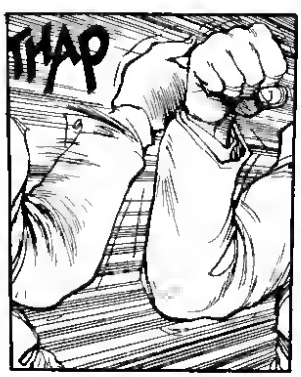
!


SHIT!

EEEK!
WHUD

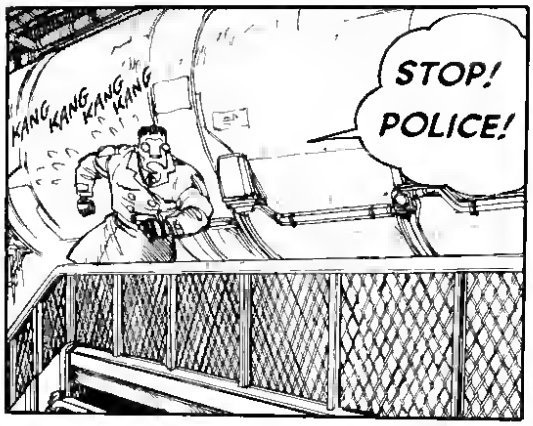
WHRAK

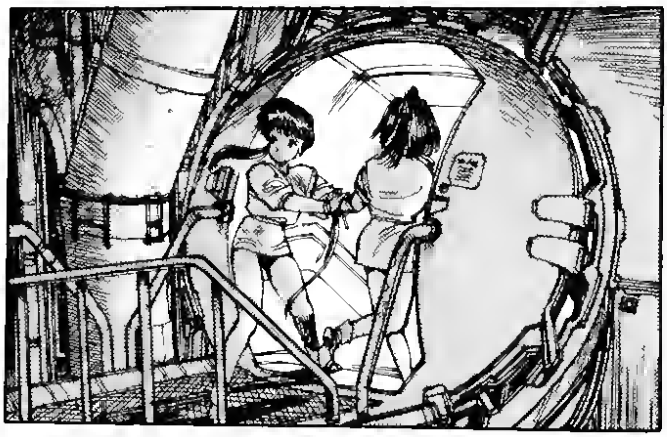
HOK
KSSH

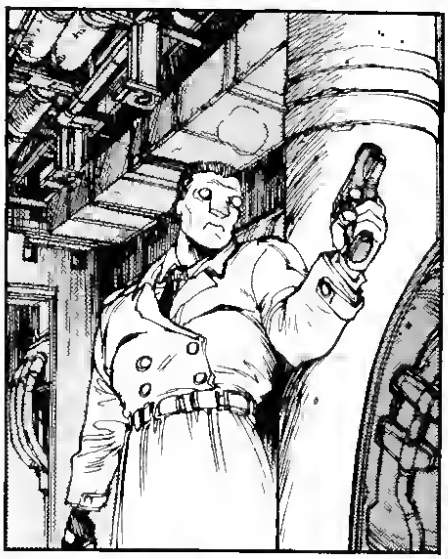

THAP

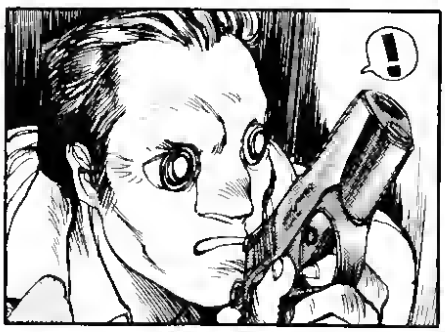
FWUMP

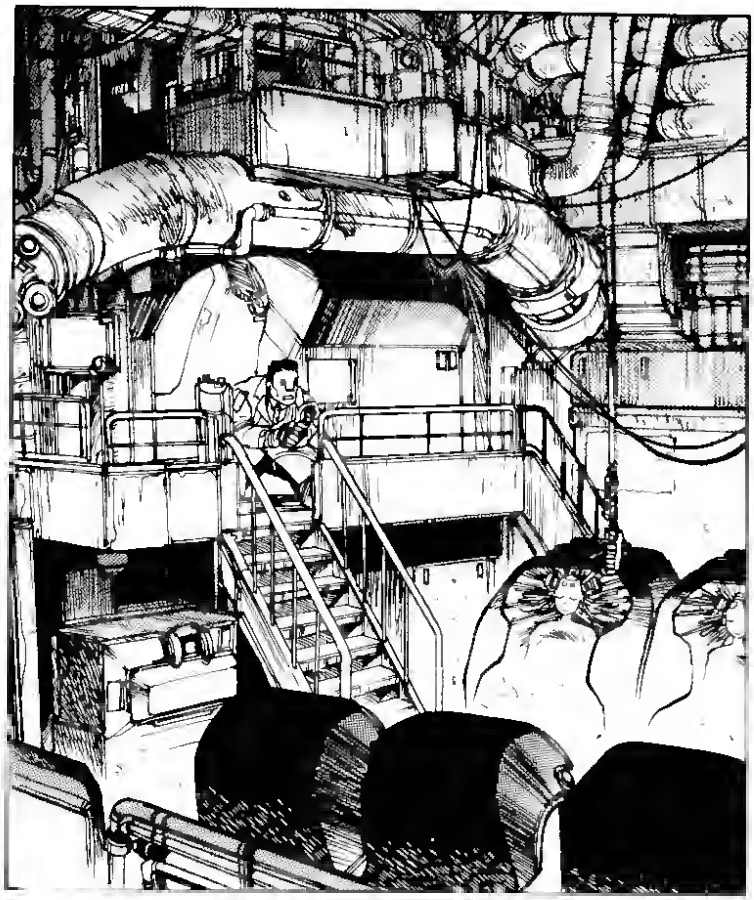
SORRY, DEAR, BUT I BELIEVE IN EQUALITY FOR THE SEXES...

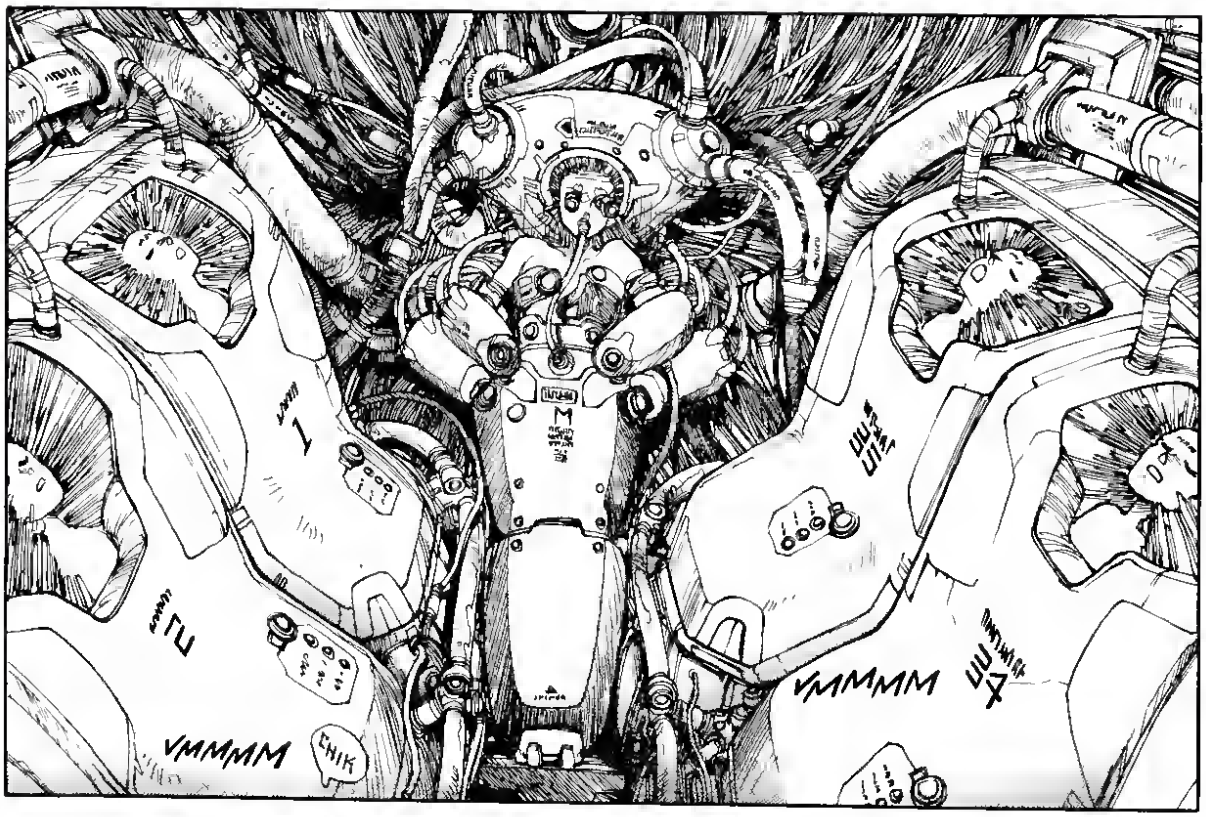

KANG KANG KANG KANG
STOP! POLICE!

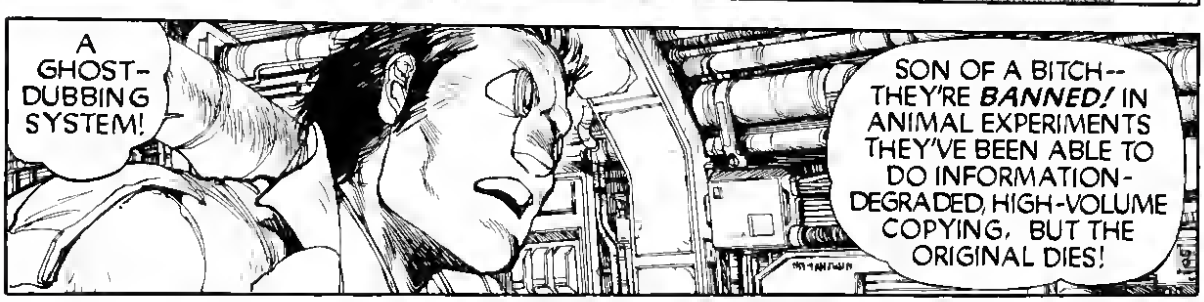


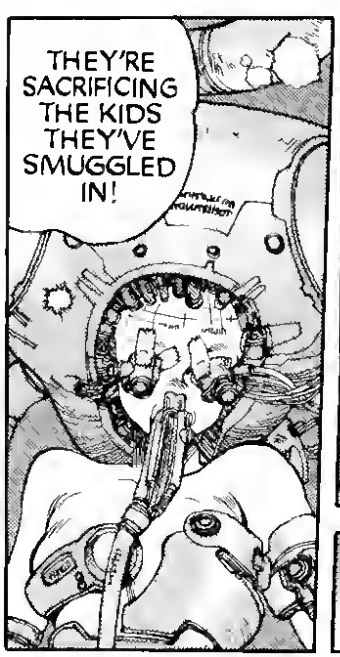



!




VMMMM
CHIK
VMMMM

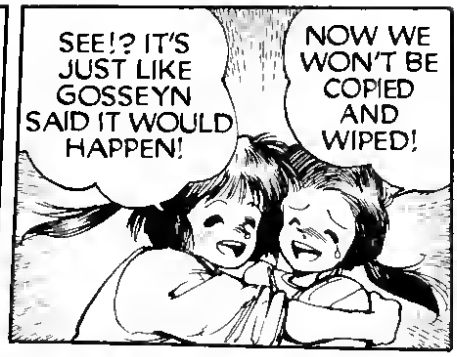

A GHOST-DUBBING SYSTEM!
SON OF A BITCH-- THEY'RE *BANNED!* IN ANIMAL EXPERIMENTS THEY'VE BEEN ABLE TO DO INFORMATION-DEGRADED, HIGH-VOLUME COPYING, BUT THE ORIGINAL DIES!

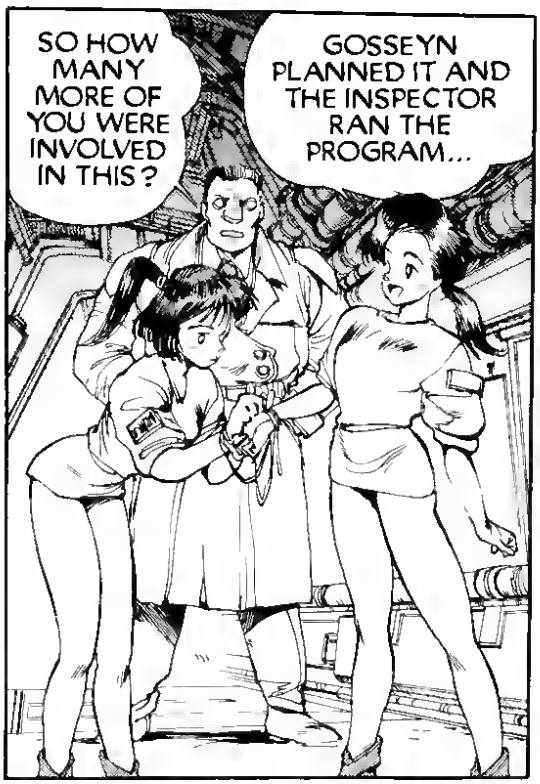

THEY'RE SACRIFICING THE KIDS THEY'VE SMUGGLED IN!

C'MON, LINK!! WE'VE GOTTA *RUN!*
NO! *GOSSEYN* SAID SOMEONE CALLED "POLICE" WOULD SAVE US!

WE'RE STAGE FOUR, SIR! GOSSEYN'S ALREADY MOVED TO STAGE FIVE AND BEEN TURNED INTO ANOTHER PERSON!

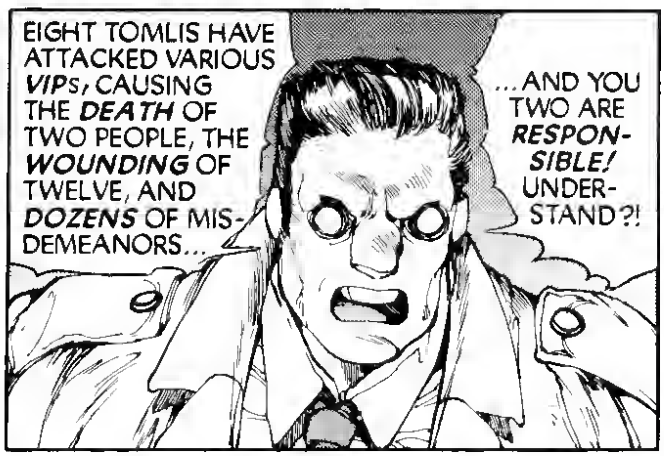
SO ARE YOU THE ONES WHO MADE THE TOMLIS GO BERSERK AND WROTE THE *SOS?*
YES! HOW'D YOU KNOW?!


SEE!? IT'S JUST LIKE GOSSEYN SAID IT WOULD HAPPEN!
NOW WE WON'T BE COPIED AND WIPED!


SO HOW MANY MORE OF YOU WERE INVOLVED IN THIS?
GOSSEYN PLANNED IT AND THE INSPECTOR RAN THE PROGRAM...

IT NEVER OCCURRED TO YOU SOMEBODY MIGHT GET *HURT?*

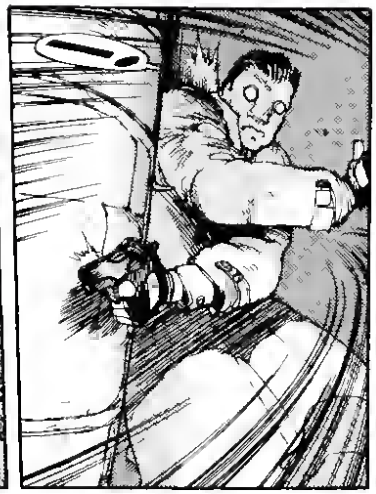
?

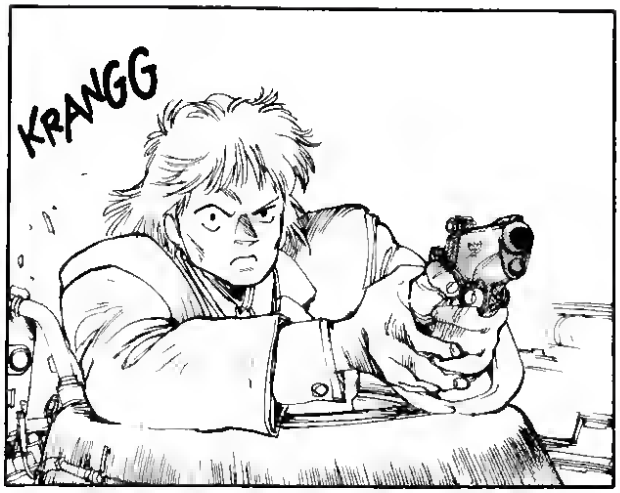

EIGHT TOMLIS HAVE ATTACKED VARIOUS *VIPs*, CAUSING THE *DEATH* OF TWO PEOPLE, THE *WOUNDING* OF TWELVE, AND *DOZENS* OF MISDEMEANORS...
...AND YOU TWO ARE *RESPONSIBLE!* UNDERSTAND?!

THAT'S NOT FAIR!
IT STARTED WHEN THE PEOPLE HERE DID BAD THINGS TO *US!*

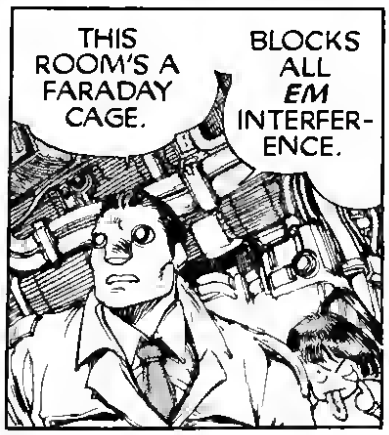
I'VE ARRESTED ABOUT TWENTY ENGINEERS, BATOU, BUT THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE IS DESERTED.

WHAM




KRANGG

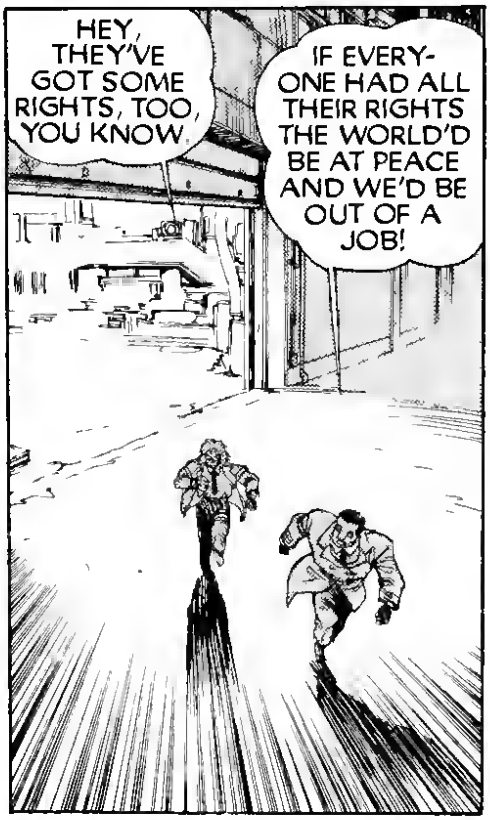
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, TOGUSA?
YOU DIDN'T RESPOND TO MY CALLS, SO I RAN OVER HERE, EXPECTING TO FIND A STIFF...


THIS ROOM'S A FARADAY CAGE.
BLOCKS ALL *EM* INTERFERENCE.

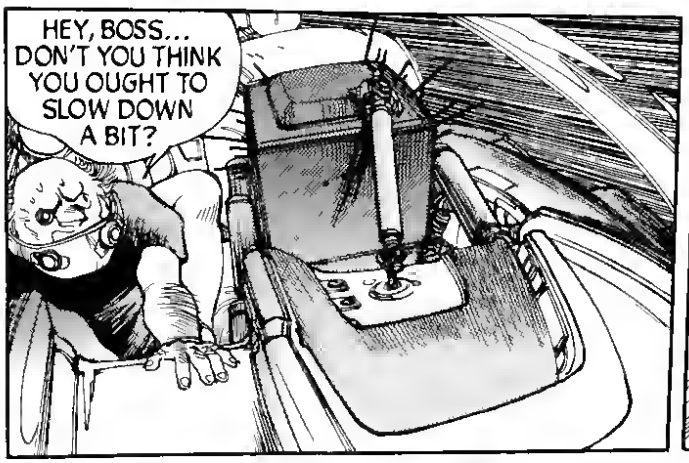
VERY FASCINATING, BUT THE COMPANY PRESIDENT JUST SKIPPED IN A CAR!

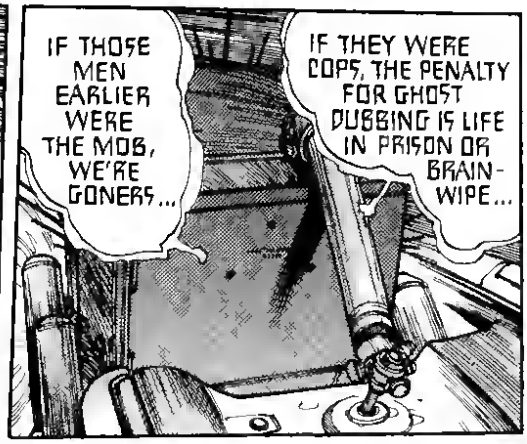
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME? LET'S GO!

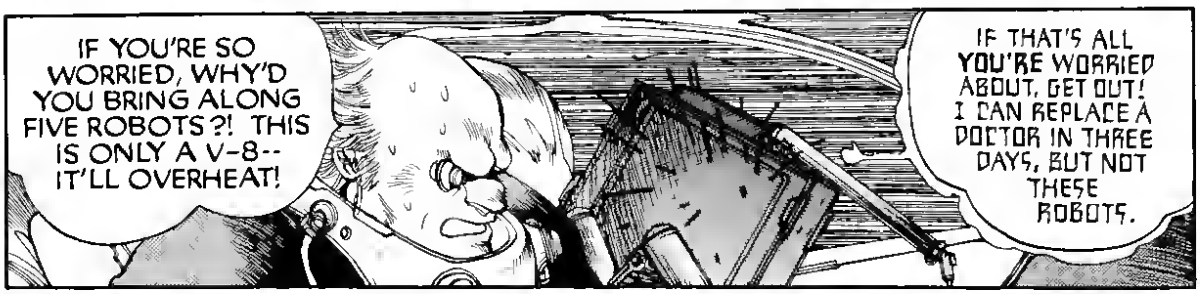
FUCHIKOMA! GIVE EVERYONE *C42* ANESTHESIA, MOVE 'EM INTO AN ARMORED TRANSPORT, AND STAND BY!

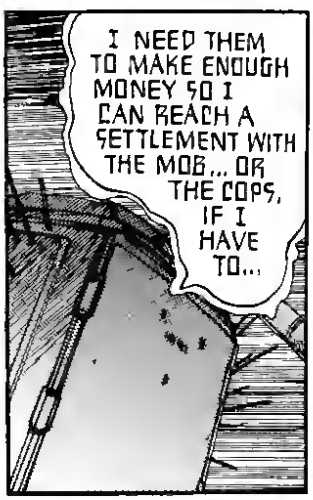

HEY, THEY'VE GOT SOME RIGHTS, TOO, YOU KNOW.
IF EVERYONE HAD ALL THEIR RIGHTS THE WORLD'D BE AT PEACE AND WE'D BE OUT OF A JOB!

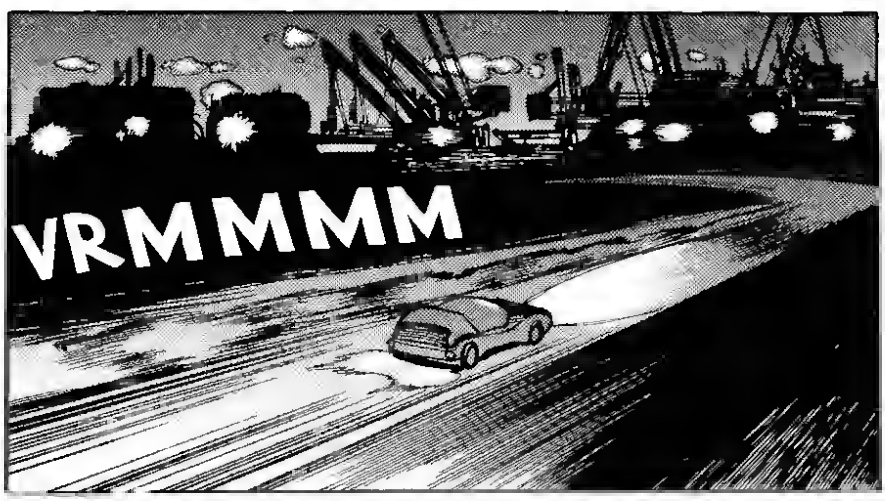
VRM


HEY, BOSS... DON'T YOU THINK YOU OUGHT TO SLOW DOWN A BIT?


IF THOSE MEN EARLIER WERE THE MOB, WE'RE GONERS...
IF THEY WERE COPS, THE PENALTY FOR GHOST DUBBING IS LIFE IN PRISON OR BRAIN-WIPE...


IF YOU'RE SO WORRIED, WHY'D YOU BRING ALONG FIVE ROBOTS?! THIS IS ONLY A V-8-- IT'LL OVERHEAT!
IF THAT'S ALL YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT, GET OUT! I CAN REPLACE A DOCTOR IN THREE DAYS, BUT NOT THESE ROBOTS.

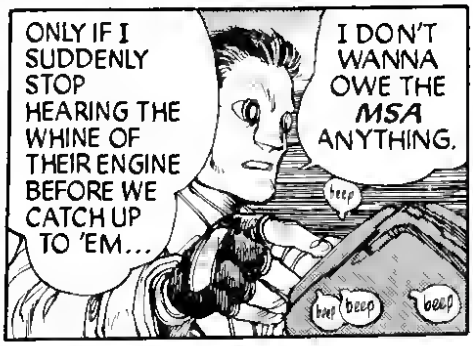

I NEED THEM TO MAKE ENOUGH MONEY SO I CAN REACH A SETTLEMENT WITH THE MOB... OR THE COPS, IF I HAVE TO...


VRMMMM

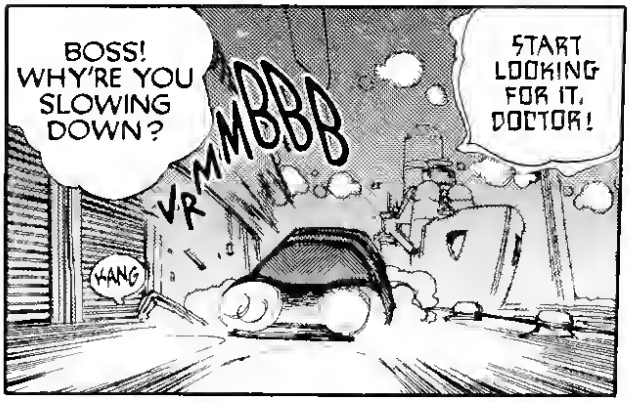
THEY'RE HEADING FOR THE PORT...

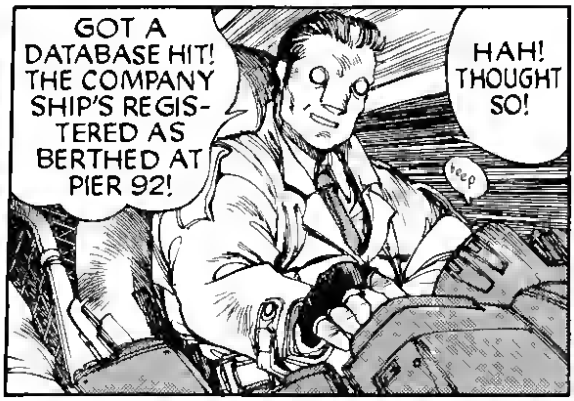
GHOST DUBBING'S LIFE OR BRAINWIPE, SO THEY'LL TRY TO FLEE THE COUNTRY...
SMUGGLING KIDS, INVOLVEMENT WITH DRUGS--HELL, I'D HEAD FOR THE HIGH SEAS, TOO.

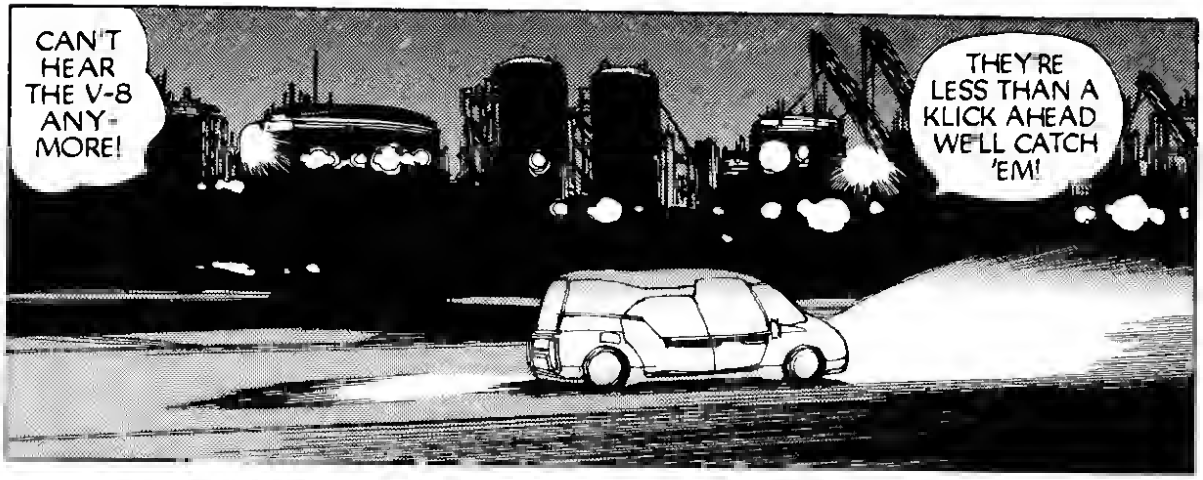
LET'S GET THE MARITIME SAFETY AGENCY TO SEAL OFF THE PORT...


ONLY IF I SUDDENLY STOP HEARING THE WHINE OF THEIR ENGINE BEFORE WE CATCH UP TO 'EM...
I DON'T WANNA OWE THE MSA ANYTHING.
beep
beep
beep
beep

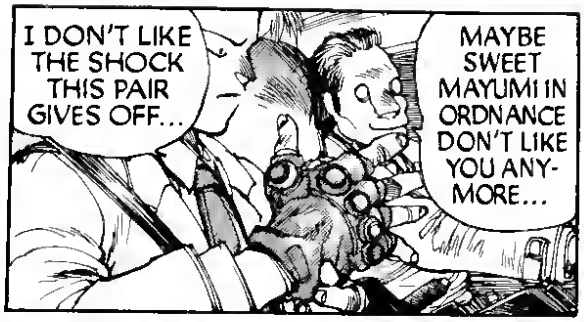
BOOHHHHHH
CHUGCHUG,CHUG
SKREEE

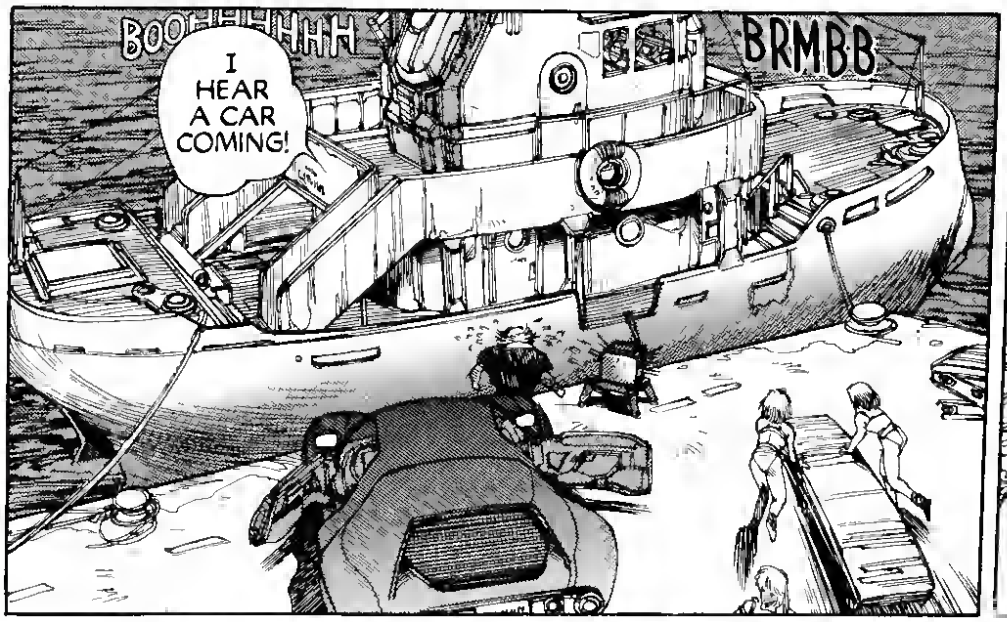

BOSS! WHY'RE YOU SLOWING DOWN?
VRMMBBB
START LOOKING FOR IT, DOCTOR!
HANG

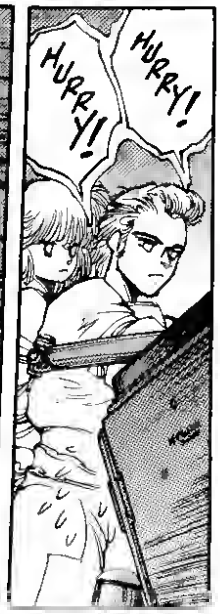

GOT A DATABASE HIT! THE COMPANY SHIP'S REGISTERED AS BERTHED AT PIER 92!
HAH! THOUGHT SO!
beep


CAN'T HEAR THE V-8 ANY-MORE!
THEY'RE LESS THAN A KLICK AHEAD WE'LL CATCH 'EM!

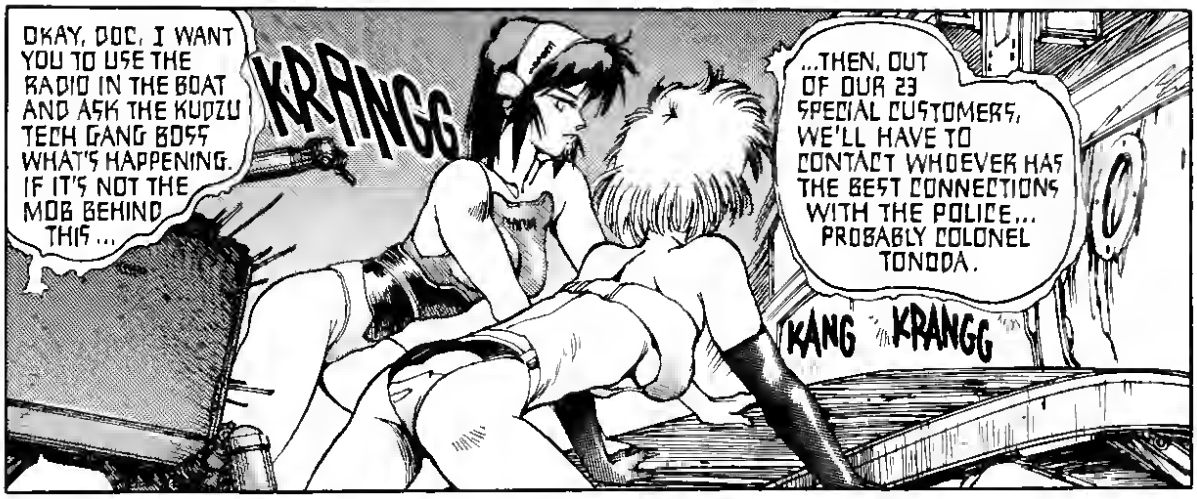
GIVEN THE SPEED THEY'RE DRIVING AT AND THE WAY THE EN-GINE IS LABORING, I'D SAY THEY'VE GOT SEVERAL ROBOTS WITH 'EM.
PUT ON YOUR BUZZ-KNUCKS!

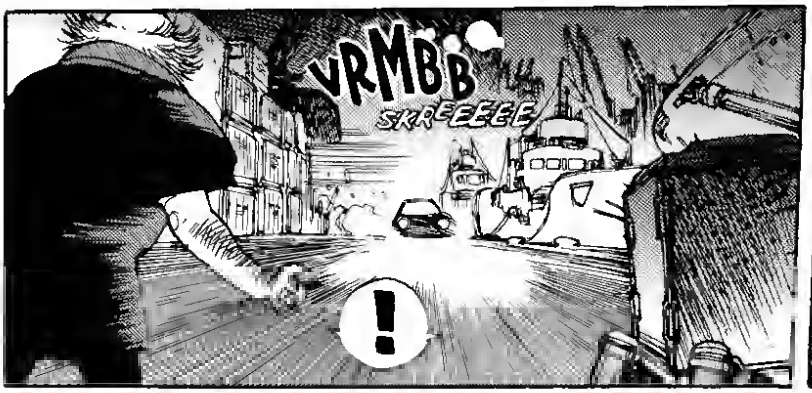

I DON'T LIKE THE SHOCK THIS PAIR GIVES OFF...
MAYBE SWEET MAYUMI IN ORDNANCE DON'T LIKE YOU ANY-MORE...

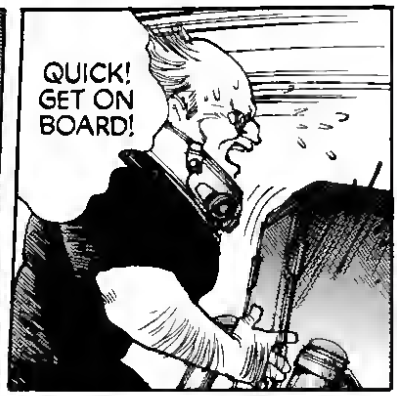

BOOHHHHHH
BRMBB
I HEAR A CAR COMING!

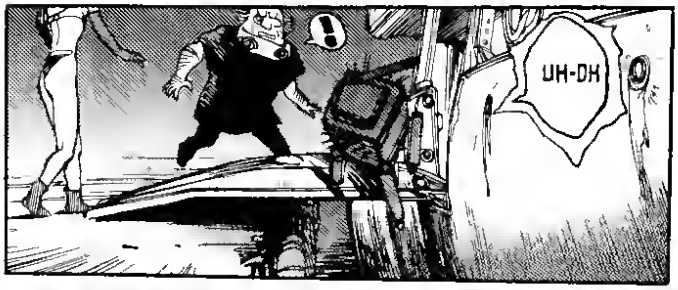

HURRY!
HURRY!

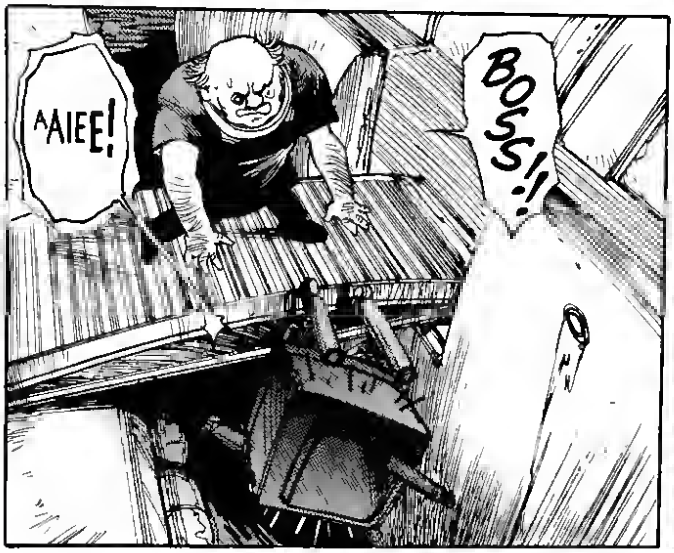
B-BOSS! MAKE THE ROBOTS ATTACK THEM!
DON'T BE AN IDIOT!
YOU WANT TO MAKE THE SITUATION EVEN WORSE?! BESIDES, THEY'RE NOT EVEN COMBAT MODELS...

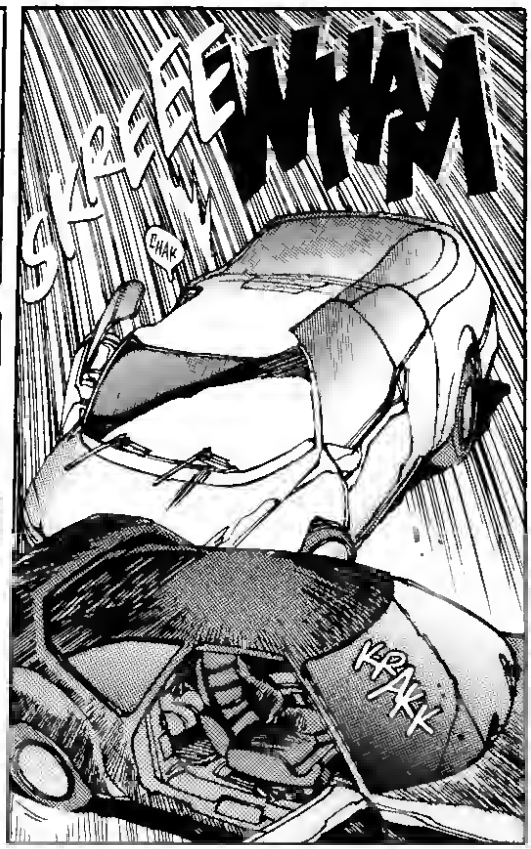

OKAY, DOC, I WANT YOU TO USE THE RADIO IN THE BOAT AND ASK THE KUDZU TECH GANG BOSS WHAT'S HAPPENING. IF IT'S NOT THE MOB BEHIND THIS ...
KRANGG
...THEN, OUT OF OUR 23 SPECIAL CUSTOMERS, WE'LL HAVE TO CONTACT WHOEVER HAS THE BEST CONNECTIONS WITH THE POLICE... PROBABLY COLONEL TONODA.
KANG KRANGG

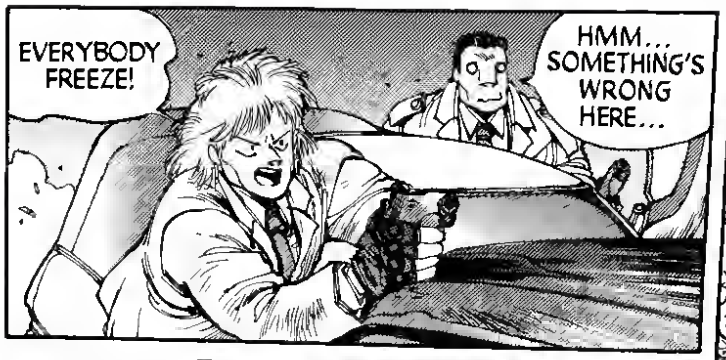

VRMBB
SKREEEEEE
!

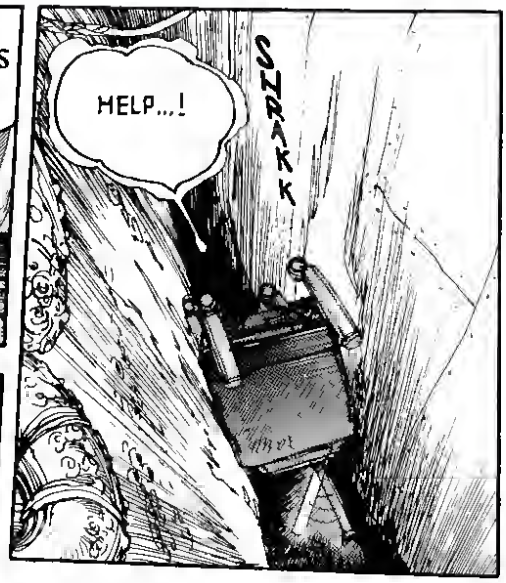

QUICK! GET ON BOARD!

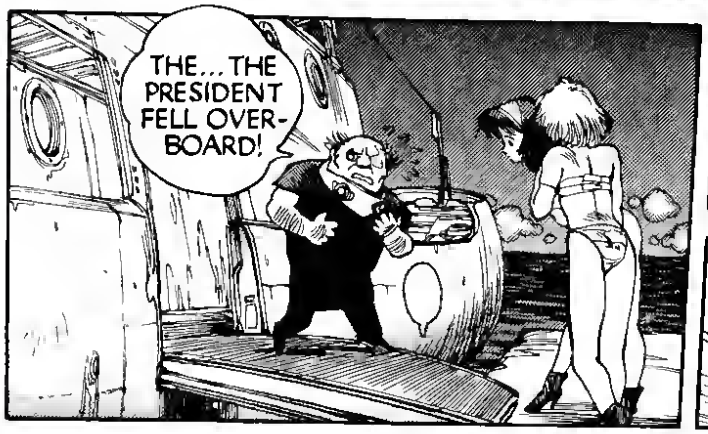

!
UH-OH


AAIEE!
BOSS!!


SKREEE
WHAM
EHAK
KRAKK


EVERYBODY FREEZE!
HMM... SOMETHING'S WRONG HERE...

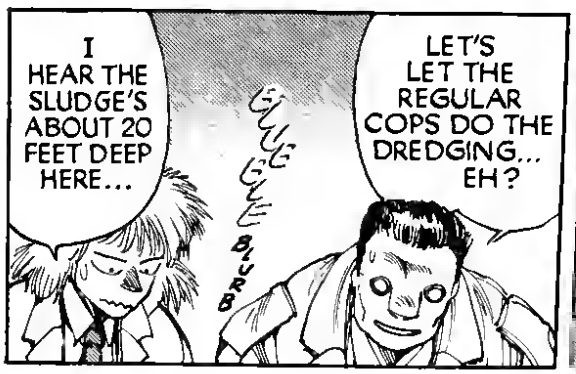

HELP...!
SNRAKK


THE... THE PRESIDENT FELL OVER-BOARD!

SOME-BODY! H-HELP!
SKREEK

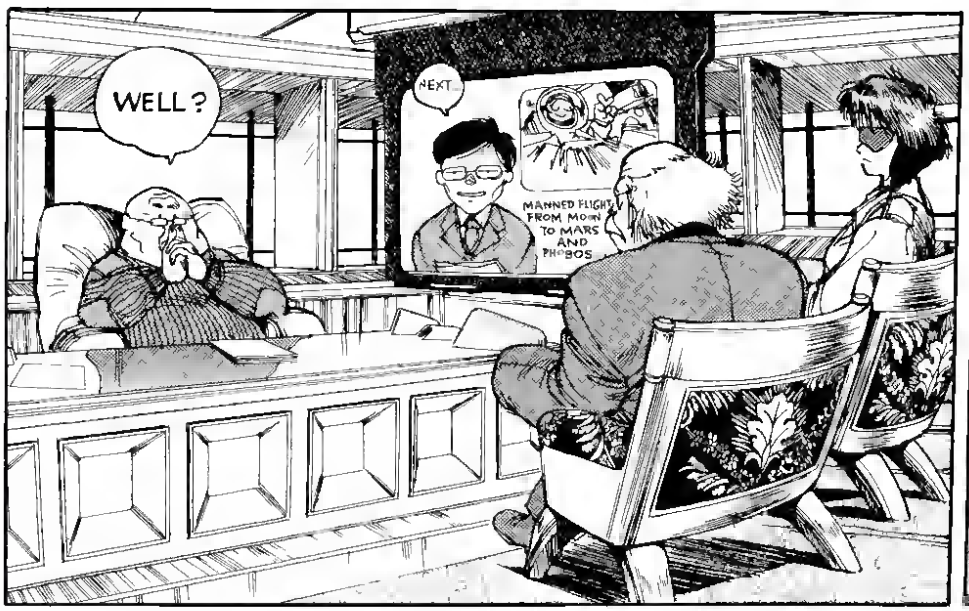
KBOOSH

BLUB BLUB

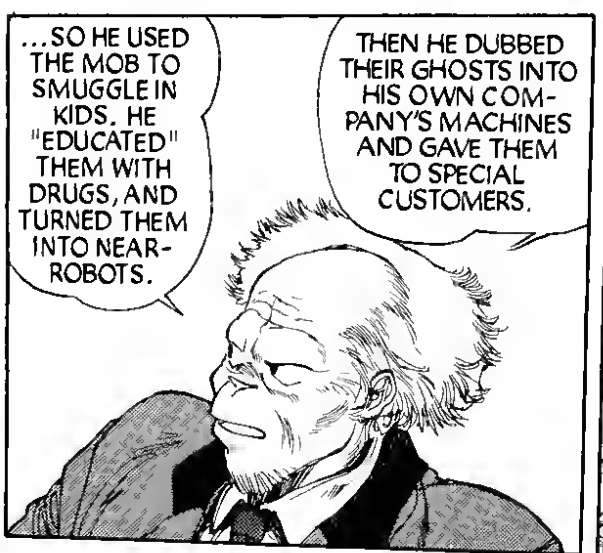

I HEAR THE SLUDGE'S ABOUT 20 FEET DEEP HERE...
LET'S LET THE REGULAR COPS DO THE DREDGING... EH?
GLUG GLUG BLURB

HE'S A JAMESON-TYPE CYBORG SO HE'LL LIVE FOR AT LEAST TWO HOURS...
WELL, LEAST WE DIDN'T HAVE TO GET ROUGH...
BOSS!!!
BLUP BLUP BLUP

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE COAST GUARD, THE PRESIDENT OF HANKA PRECISION INSTRUMENTS WAS SALVAGED AND ARRESTED...
QUIT KICKING!
PRESIDENT OF HANKA PRECISION INSTRUMENTS ARRESTED!!
THE PRESIDENT IS COMPLETELY MECHANIZED EXCEPT FOR HIS SPINAL CORD AND BRAIN. AN INVESTIGATION WILL BE CONDUCTED TO DETERMINE WHETHER THIS CRIME WAS COMMITTED BY HIS GHOST, OR WHETHER IT WAS A MECHANICAL MALFUNCTION.


WELL?
NEXT...
MANNED FLIGHT FROM MOON TO MARS AND PHOBOS

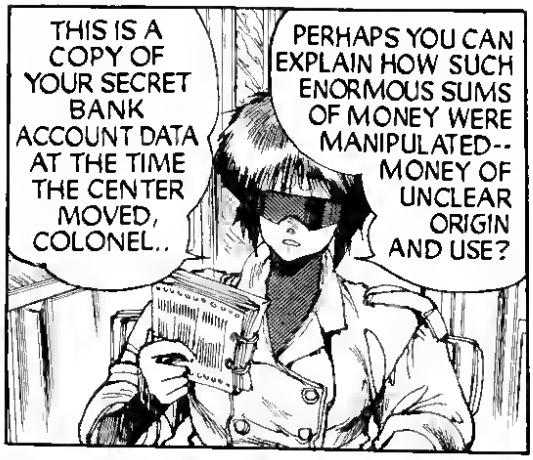
HE APPARENTLY COULDN'T KEEP UP WITH HIS COMPETITORS IN AI DEVELOPMENT...


...SO HE USED THE MOB TO SMUGGLE IN KIDS. HE "EDUCATED" THEM WITH DRUGS, AND TURNED THEM INTO NEAR-ROBOTS.
THEN HE DUBBED THEIR GHOSTS INTO HIS OWN COMPANY'S MACHINES AND GAVE THEM TO SPECIAL CUSTOMERS.

AND I WAS ONE OF THOSE "SPECIAL CUSTOMERS"?

THE HANKA FACILITY WAS BUILT ON THE FORMER SITE OF THE OLD INTELLIGENCE DIVISION'S TRAINING CENTER... AND THE HEAD OF THE CENTER WHEN IT MOVED, COLONEL, WAS NONE OTHER THAN YOU...

COME ON, NOW... I WAS AN OFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE HANKA MONITORING COMMITTEE, SO PROTOTYPES WERE NATURALLY SENT TO ME FOR EVALUATION, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW HOW THEY WERE MANUFACTURED!
heh heh

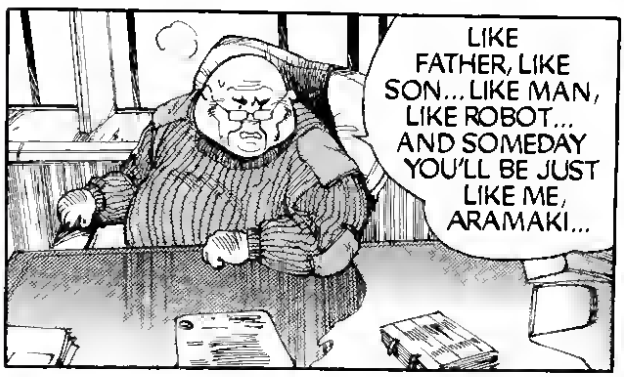

THIS IS A COPY OF YOUR SECRET BANK ACCOUNT DATA AT THE TIME THE CENTER MOVED, COLONEL..
PERHAPS YOU CAN EXPLAIN HOW SUCH ENORMOUS SUMS OF MONEY WERE MANIPULATED-- MONEY OF UNCLEAR ORIGIN AND USE?

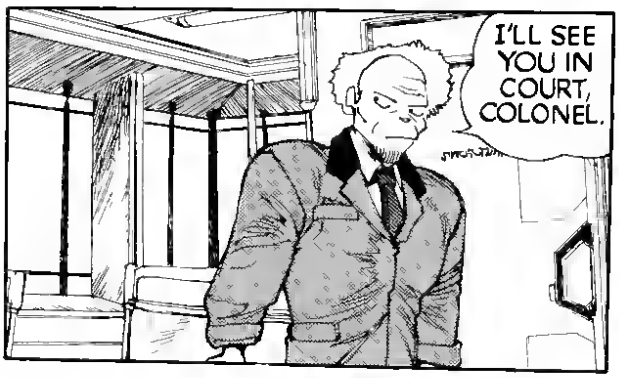
FWAP

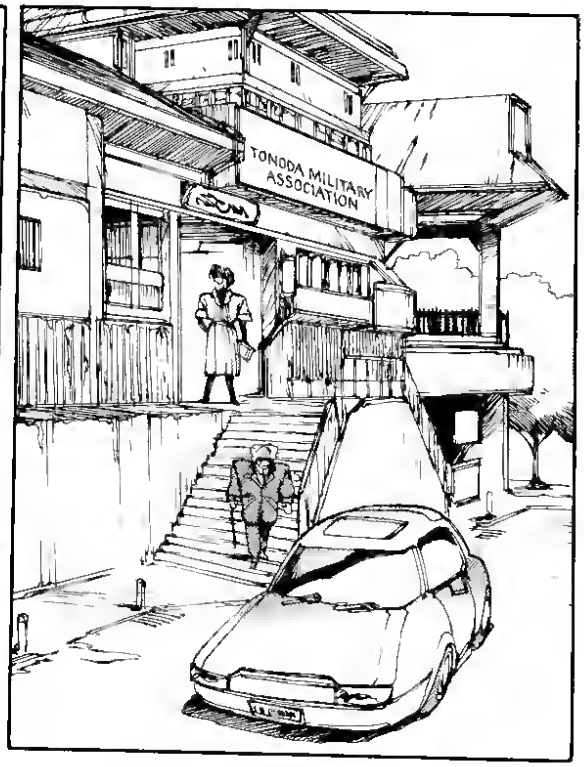
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO TAUGHT ME TO ALWAYS "CHECK THE WOMEN AND THE MONEY FIRST," COLONEL.

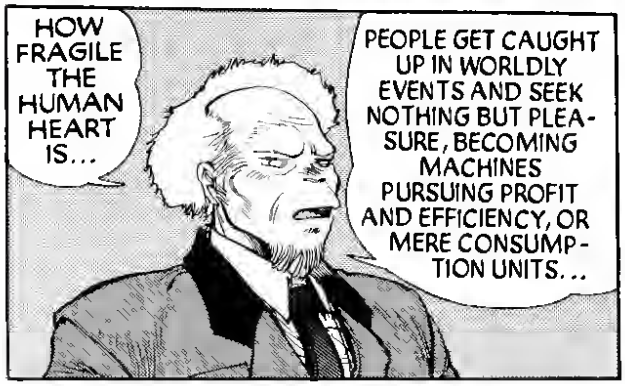
WHY... YOU...

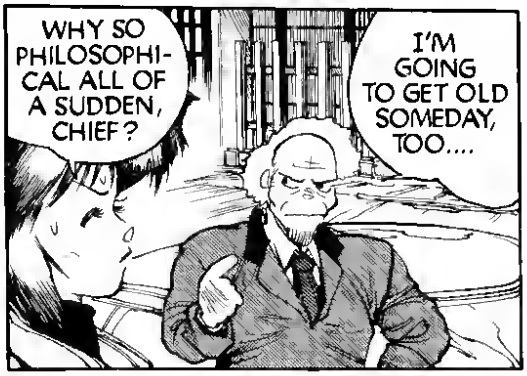
YOU WERE MORE AFRAID OF TERRORISTS THAN YOU WERE ABOUT PEOPLE LEARNING OF YOUR CONNECTION WITH HANKA, WEREN'T YOU, COLONEL?
YOU MADE TOO MANY ENEMIES WHEN YOU WERE HEAD OF INTELLIGENCE...

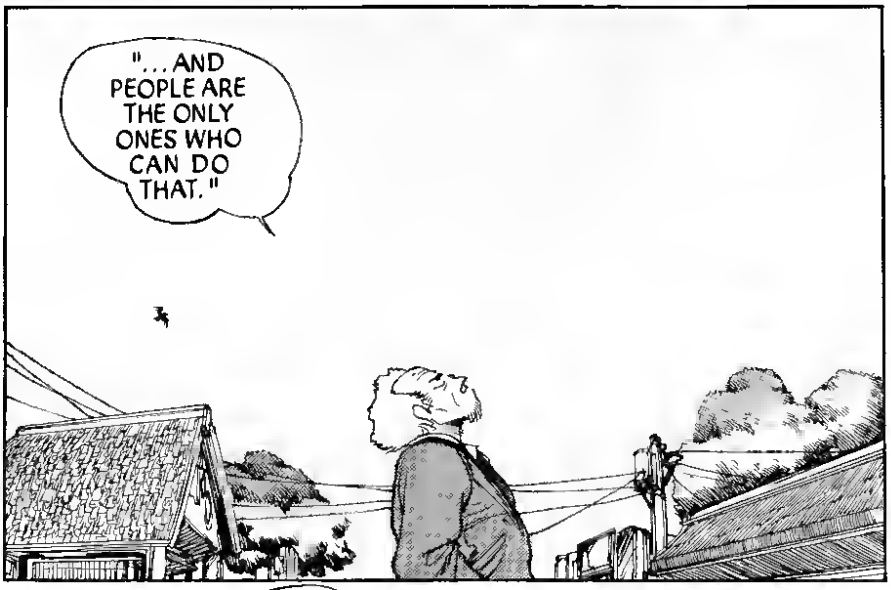

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON... LIKE MAN, LIKE ROBOT... AND SOMEDAY YOU'LL BE JUST LIKE ME, ARAMAKI...


I'LL SEE YOU IN COURT, COLONEL.


TONODA MILITARY ASSOCIATION





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# 07

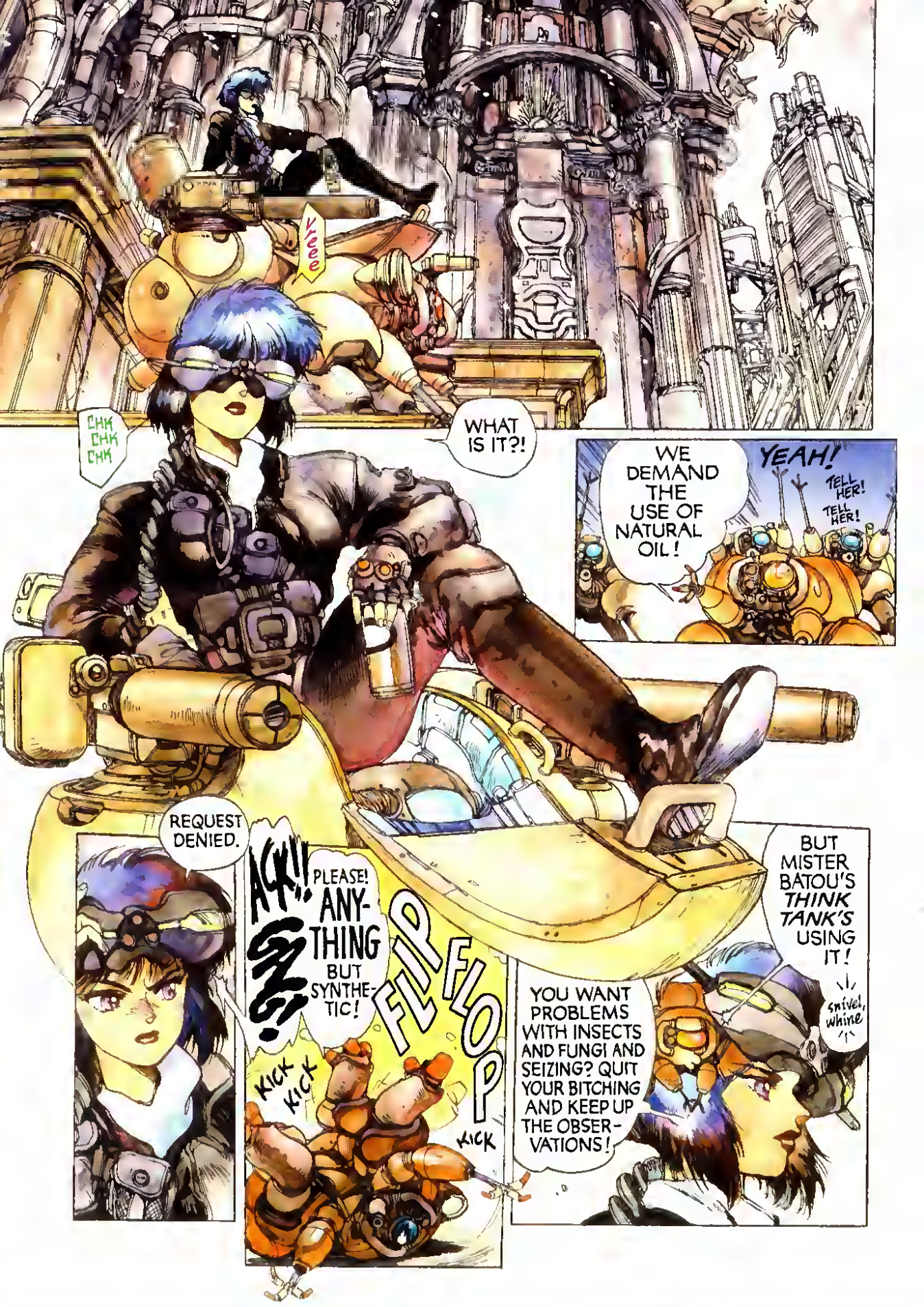
PHANTOM

FUND

24. 12. 2029

BRASS CATCHER ON TOP
THE SEBURO™ C-25a AND 26a BOTH HOLD 50 ROUNDS OF 6x25 HV SHELLS
MAGAZINE SAME AS THE FN-P90.
SO, WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE THE BRASS CATCHER ATTACHED, THE SHELLS ARE EJECTED FORWARD?
SEEMS TO ME IT'D TEND TO JAM...
ORDNANCE #4 (SMALL ARMS)
5
HEY, YOU GOT ANY IDEA HOW MANY MONTHS WE SPENT TESTING THAT THING ?!
LOOK AT THESE CALLOUSES, WILL YA?! I AIN'T KIDDING!
HAHAHA YOU LIAR!
!
WELL, PUT A MATTE FINISH ON IT.
IF I GET THE CHANCE, I'LL TRY IT OUT.
GEE!
LOOKIT THAT!
WOW! COOL!
DON'T TOUCH! THIS TANK'S FOR SECTION ONE!
Heh heh
KCHIK

Huh?! ONLY THE BRAIN'S BEEN ACTI-VATED?
HMM... NO BARRIER?!
I... I MEAN YOU... AND I...
ME AND YOU... WE?
?!
SNAP!
CHIEF'S CALLING... LET'S GO!
WHA--!?
B-BUT I WAS ON THE VERGE OF A PROFOUND INSIGHT!
DAMN... NO CLEAR DATA RECORD, BUT I KNOW IT WAS SOMETHING *TERRIBLY* PROFOUND!
YOU *DO* REMEMBER YOUR ROLE AS MY "SUIT," I HOPE...

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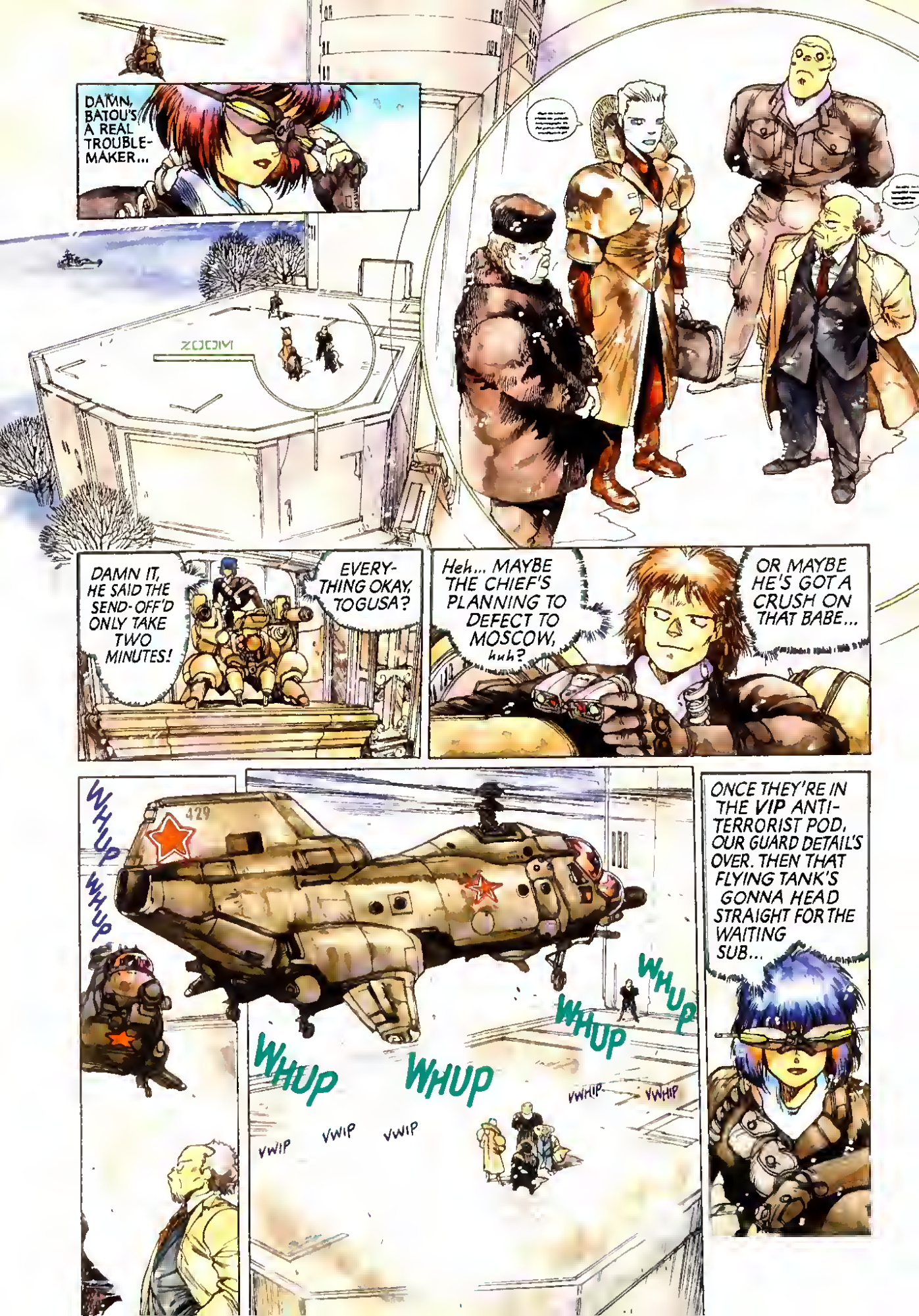

DAMN, BATOU'S A REAL TROUBLE-MAKER...
DAMN IT, HE SAID THE SEND-OFF'D ONLY TAKE TWO MINUTES!
EVERY-THING OKAY, TOGUSA?
Heh... MAYBE THE CHIEF'S PLANNING TO DEFECT TO MOSCOW, huh?
OR MAYBE HE'S GOT A CRUSH ON THAT BABE...
WHUP WHUP
WHUP WHUP WHUP
VWIP VWIP VWIP
VWHIP VWHIP
ONCE THEY'RE IN THE VIP ANTI-TERRORIST POD, OUR GUARD DETAIL'S OVER. THEN THAT FLYING TANK'S GONNA HEAD STRAIGHT FOR THE WAITING SUB...

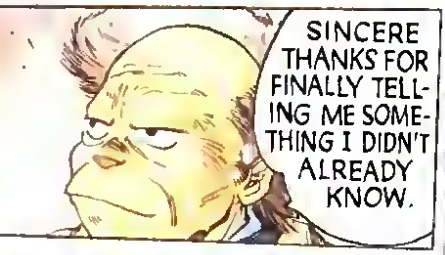
WHIP
WHIP
WHIP
WHIP
WMMM
WELL, COMRADE ARAMAKI... SOMEDAY, WHEN MAGADAN IN SIBERIA'S A GREAT CITY LIKE YOUR FUKUOKA, I'LL INVITE YOU TO VISIT, YES?
UNFORTUNATELY, I'M NOT GOING TO LIVE AS LONG AS METHUSELAH DID...

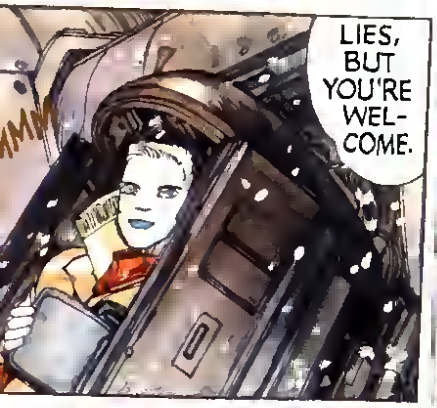
OUR EXCHANGE DIDN'T BEAR MUCH FRUIT, BUT FOR BOTH OF US, AT LEAST, I THINK IT WAS WORTHWHILE.

IN PARTING, I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU A LITTLE PRESENT.
FREE

IF YOU MEAN THE CLIPPINGS FROM THE SOYUZ EVENING EDITION, I'VE ALREADY GOT THOSE.

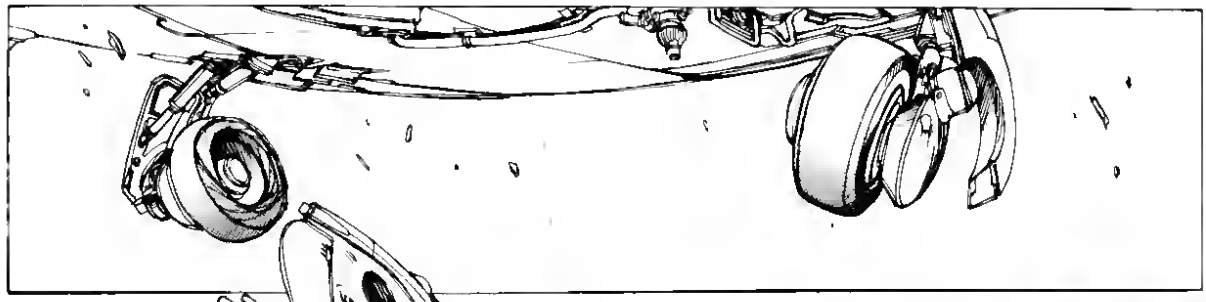
NO. I'M JUST LETTING YOU KNOW THAT MY SUCCESSOR, *ASECHINOV*, IS SOMEONE WHO WASN'T SELECTED BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.
HE GOT HIS JOB THROUGH MONEY LAUNDERED BY GENERAL MARLOV, WHOM I BELIEVE YOU KNOW VERY WELL INDEED.
CCCP

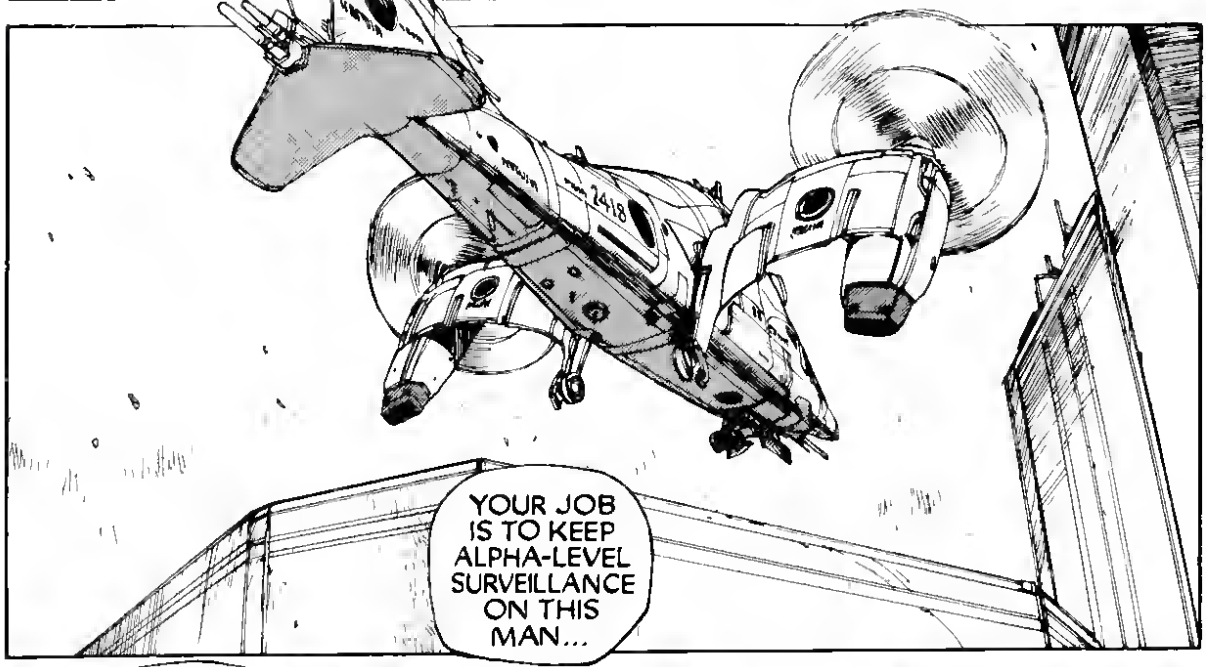

SINCERE THANKS FOR FINALLY TELLING ME SOMETHING I DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW.


LIES, BUT YOU'RE WELCOME.

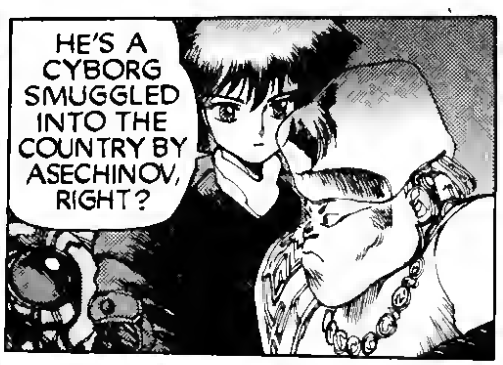
WHUP
WHUP

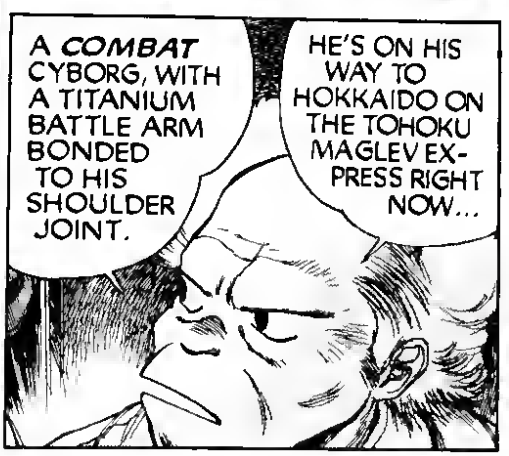
WE'RE FLYING NORTH!
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
ALL TEAM MEMBERS REPORT TO HELIPORT!




YOUR JOB IS TO KEEP ALPHA-LEVEL SURVEILLANCE ON THIS MAN...

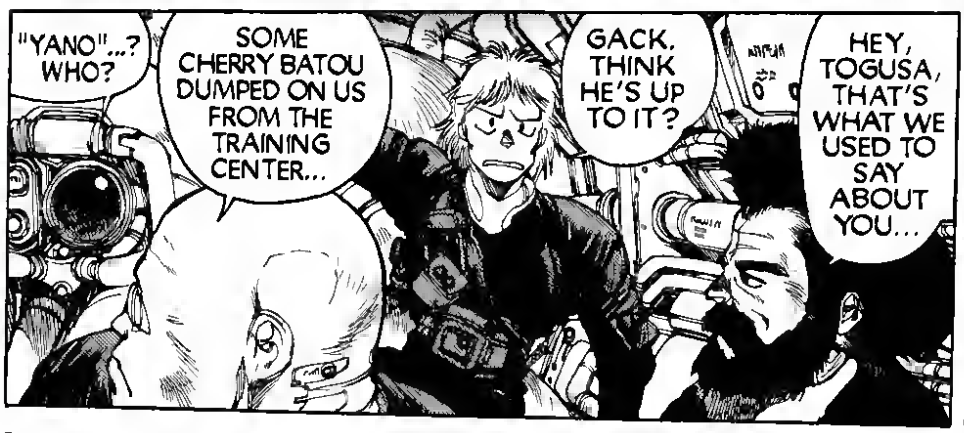
...KOIL KRASNOV, FOR 24 HOURS A DAY. HIS ESTIMATED AGE, 26.
47%


HE'S A CYBORG SMUGGLED INTO THE COUNTRY BY ASECHINOV, RIGHT?


A COMBAT CYBORG, WITH A TITANIUM BATTLE ARM BONDED TO HIS SHOULDER JOINT.
HE'S ON HIS WAY TO HOKKAIDO ON THE TOHOKU MAGLEV EXPRESS RIGHT NOW...

THE TOHOKU MAGLEV?! WHY'S HE USING THAT?
BECAUSE HE'S PACKING AND COULDN'T GET THROUGH AIRPORT SECURITY, STUPID...
WHO'S WATCHING HIM NOW?
FISST

YANO.

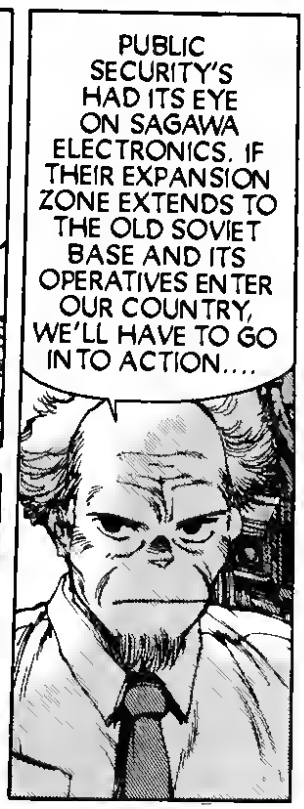

"YANO"...? WHO?
SOME CHERRY BATOU DUMPED ON US FROM THE TRAINING CENTER...
GACK. THINK HE'S UP TO IT?
HEY, TOGUSA, THAT'S WHAT WE USED TO SAY ABOUT YOU...

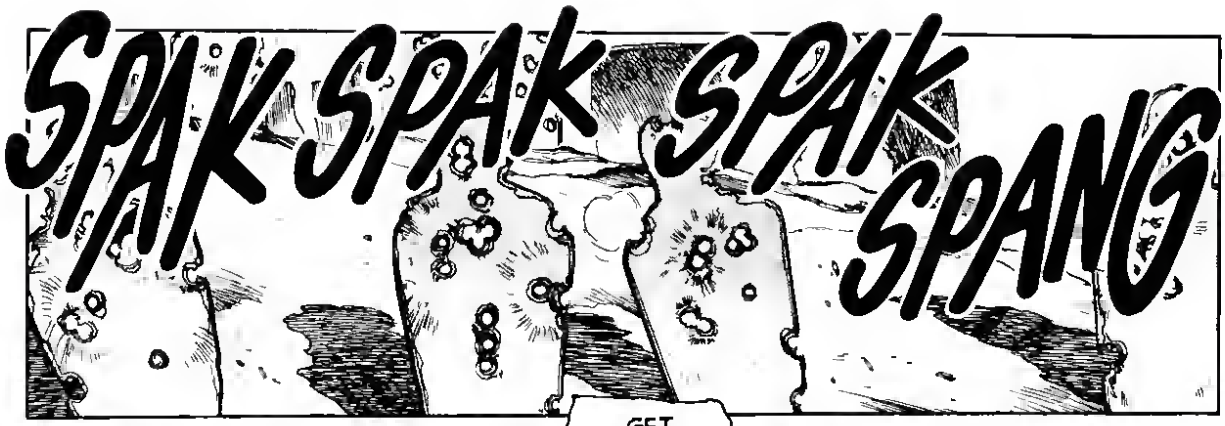
WITH ALL OF US ASSIGNED TOGETHER, IT SURE CAN'T BE ANY NORMAL OL' STAKE-OUT...

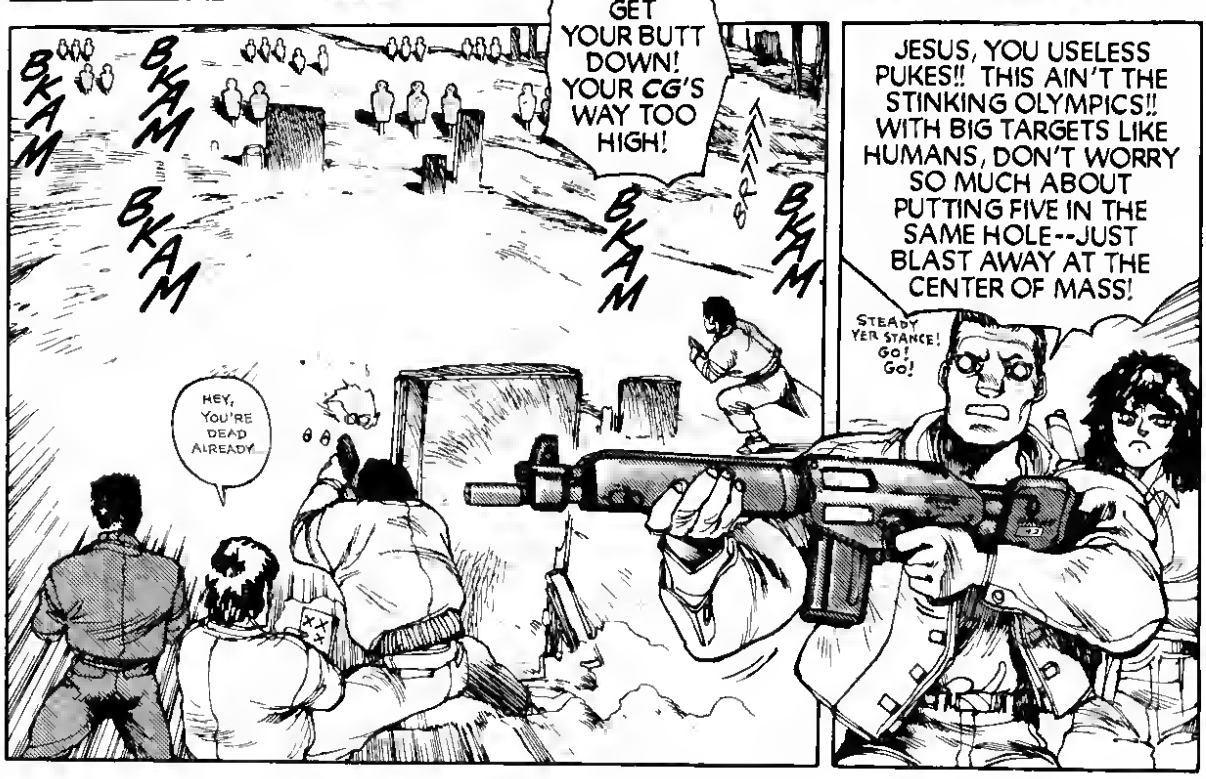
SAGAWA ELECTRONICS, IN THE ETOROFU GOVERNMENT BRANCH OFFICE, IS EXPANDING ITS UNDERGROUND FACTORY IN THE BERTARVE WARD...

BERTARVE?
CHIK
WHERE THE SOVIET SUB BASE WAS IN THE OLD DAYS?

YEAH, I HEARD THAT WHEN THE SOVIETS WITHDREW, THEY SET DEMO CHARGES AND BURIED IT...


PUBLIC SECURITY'S HAD ITS EYE ON SAGAWA ELECTRONICS. IF THEIR EXPANSION ZONE EXTENDS TO THE OLD SOVIET BASE AND ITS OPERATIVES ENTER OUR COUNTRY, WE'LL HAVE TO GO INTO ACTION....

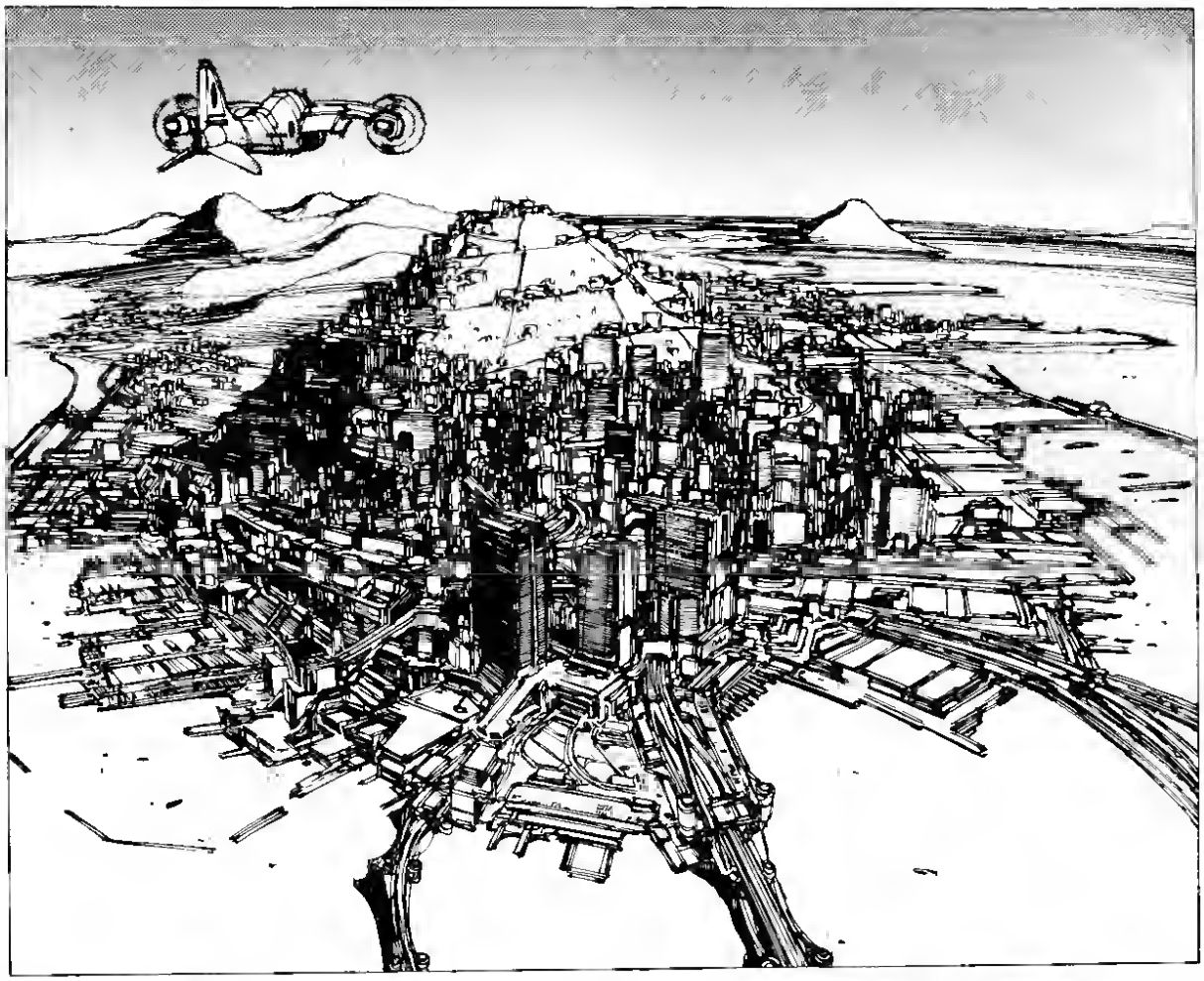

SPAK SPAK SPAK SPANG

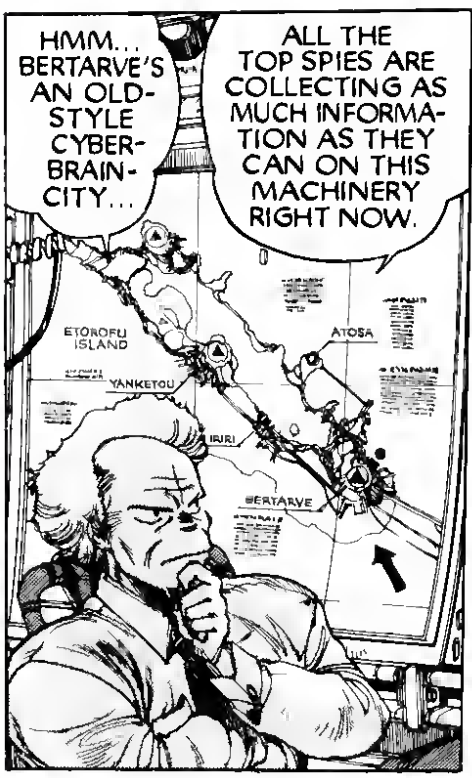

BKAM
BKAM
BKAM
BKAM
BKAM
GET YOUR BUTT DOWN! YOUR CG'S WAY TOO HIGH!
HEY, YOU'RE DEAD ALREADY.
JESUS, YOU USELESS PUKES!! THIS AIN'T THE STINKING OLYMPICS!! WITH BIG TARGETS LIKE HUMANS, DON'T WORRY SO MUCH ABOUT PUTTING FIVE IN THE SAME HOLE--JUST BLAST AWAY AT THE CENTER OF MASS!
STEADY YER STANCE! GO! GO!

B-BKAM!
MR. BATOU, MAJOR KUSANAGI WANTS YOU TO GO TO THE "FAR NORTH"...

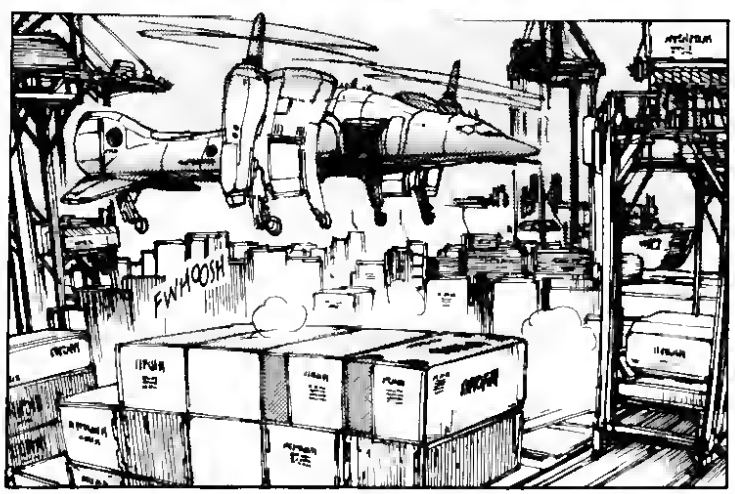
REALLY!? ALL RIGHT!! WELL, I WASN'T CUT OUT FOR TRAINING, ANYWAY...!
HEH HEH

SHIT! THIS THING'S JAMMED ON ME AGAIN!
STOP WHINING, IDIOT! TEAR THE GUN DOWN AND CLEAN IT!
MR. BATOU! SIGN THESE!

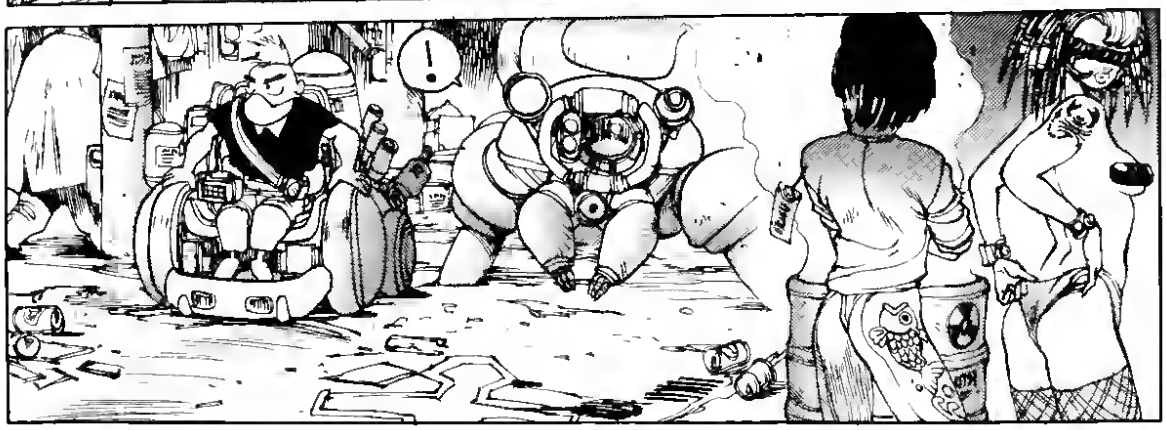



HMM... BERTARVE'S AN OLD-STYLE CYBER-BRAIN-CITY...
ALL THE TOP SPIES ARE COLLECTING AS MUCH INFORMATION AS THEY CAN ON THIS MACHINERY RIGHT NOW.
ETOROFU ISLAND
ATOSA
YANKETOU
IRURI
BERTARVE

ISHIKAWA! I WANT YOU TO JOIN UP WITH BATOU AND TAKE OVER THE TAILING FROM YANO. WE'LL MEET AT 08:45 AT GRIDREF 47-22.
WILL DO.
AULD LANG SYNE


FWHOOSH

I WONDER WHAT THE HELL KOIL'S COME HERE FOR?
NOT FOR SIGHT-SEEING, EH?
GIMME SOME!
I'M EVEN MORE WORRIED ABOUT WHY SAGAWA'S DIGGING UP THE OLD SOVIET BASE...
OKAY, BOMA, YOU AND TOGUSA TAKE THE UNDER-GROUND FACTORY. I'LL HANDLE THE HEAD OFFICE.
AND I WANT FIBER-OP COMM LINES RUN! NO RF FROM NOW ON, UNDER-STAND?!
GAIA
SANKO
DING

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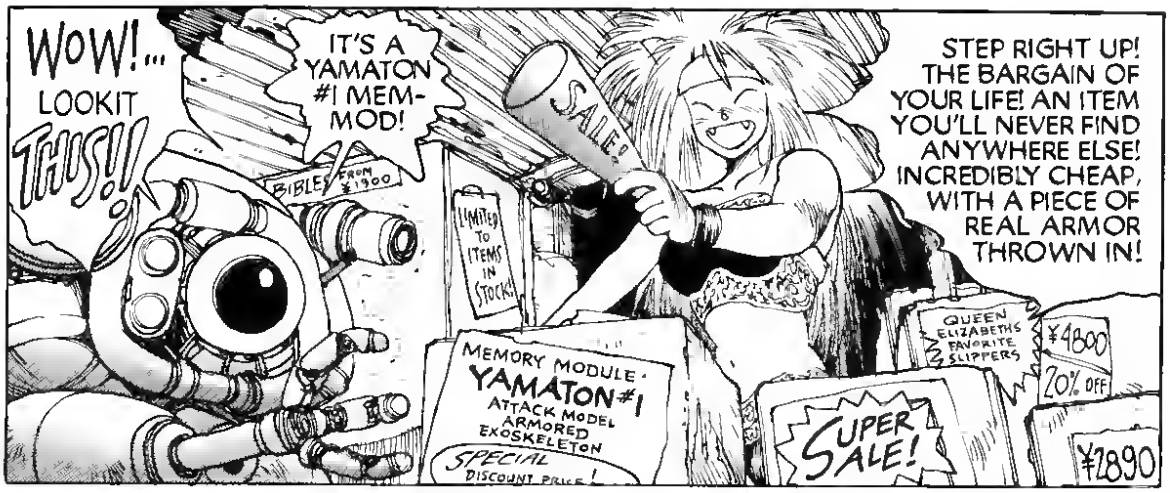
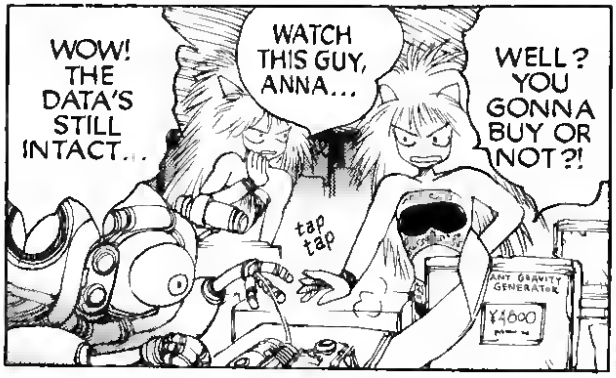
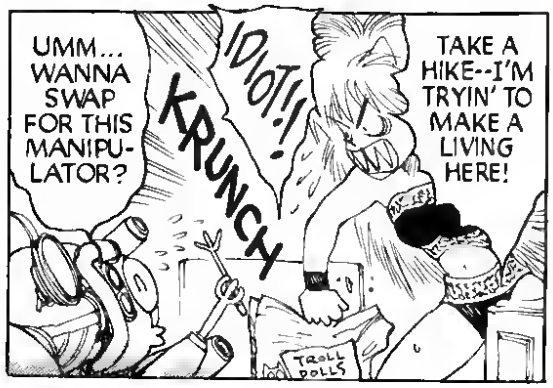
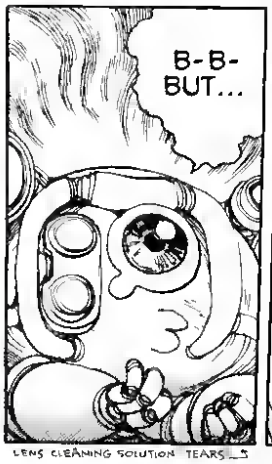
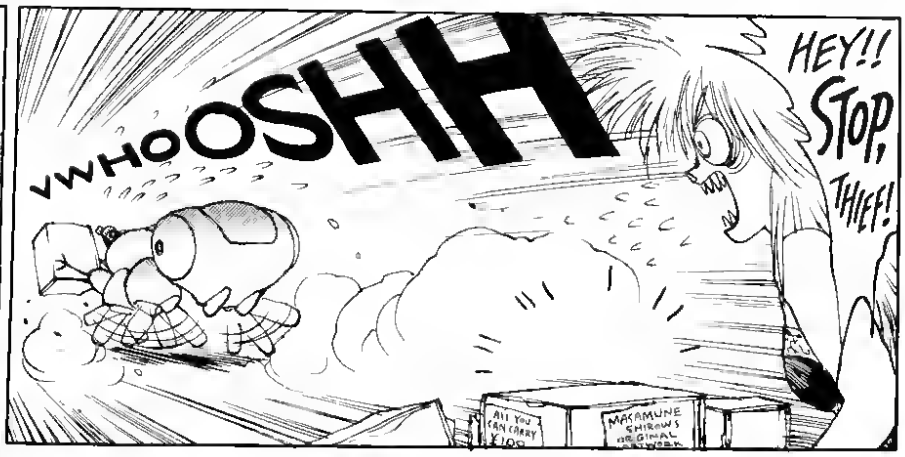


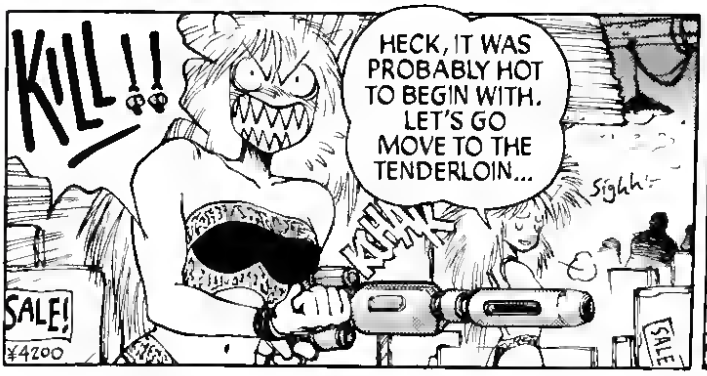



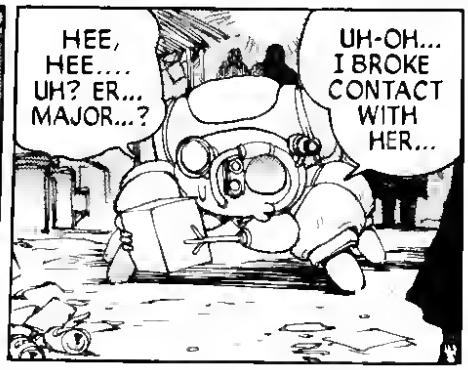




LENS CLEANING SOLUTION TEARS_S

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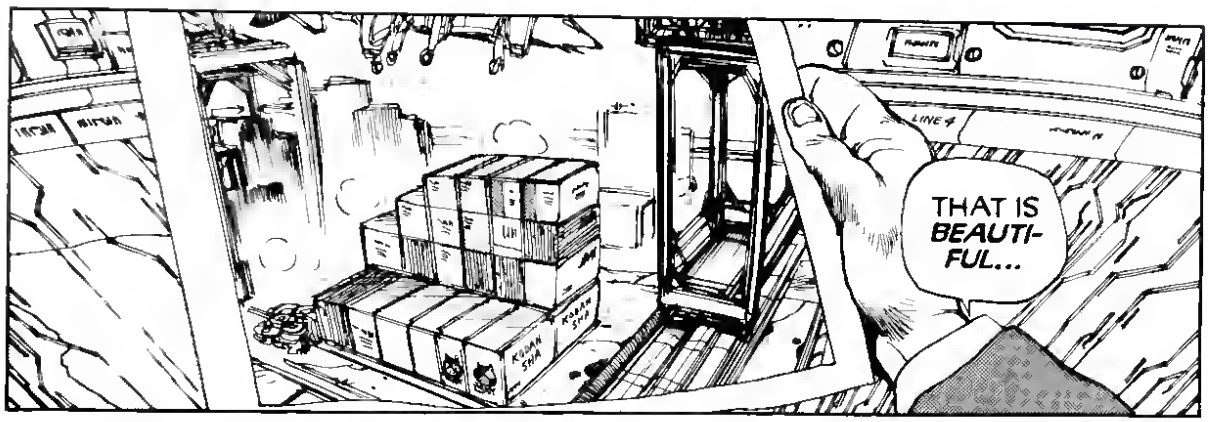
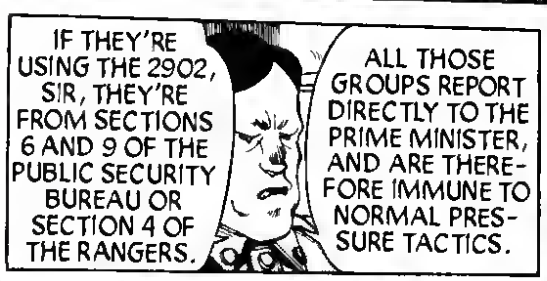

THAT IS *BEAUTI-FUL...*

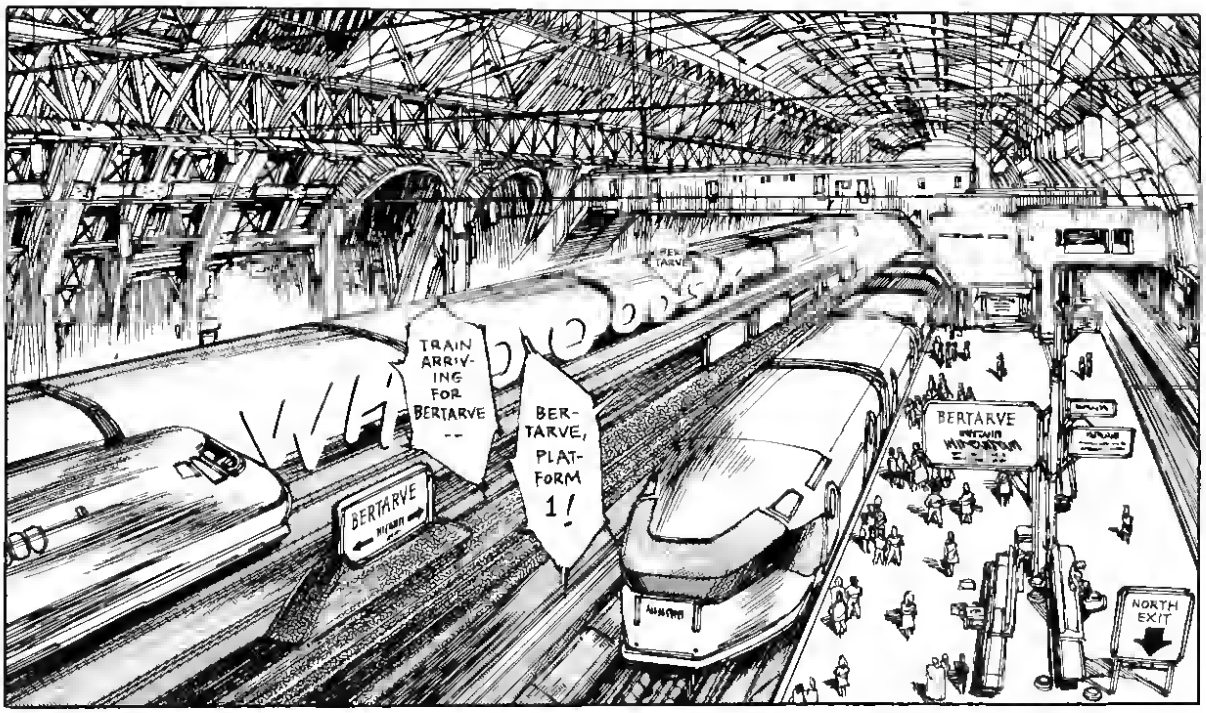
THANK YOU, SIR.
I'M NOT TALKING TO YOU. I'M TALKING ABOUT THEIR OPTICAL CAM-OUFLAGE...

IT'S GOT TO BE *KYO-RE* 2902 MODEL OPTO-CAM...IT'S TOO BAD OUR SAGAWA OPTICS HYPER-RES CAMERA CAN'T HANDLE IT. WE'VE GOT A REAL PROBLEM ON OUR HANDS, NOW....


IF THEY'RE USING THE 2902, SIR, THEY'RE FROM SECTIONS 6 AND 9 OF THE PUBLIC SECURITY BUREAU OR SECTION 4 OF THE RANGERS.
ALL THOSE GROUPS REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE PRIME MINISTER, AND ARE THERE-FORE IMMUNE TO NORMAL PRES-SURE TACTICS.

LISTEN-- THE ONLY ONES *IMMUNE* TO PRESSURE ARE THE HEADS OF THE UNIONS MANIPULATING PARLIAMENT...
ALL THIS STUFF ABOUT "REPORTING DIRECTLY TO THE PRIME MINISTER" IS JUST ON PAPER.

SO GET WITH IT.
TIME'S OUR ENEMY.
YESSIR.


TRAIN ARRIVING FOR BERTARVE --
BERTARVE, PLATFORM 1!
BERTARVE
BERTARVE
NORTH EXIT

IN THE BATHROOM, EH...

POOR YANO....

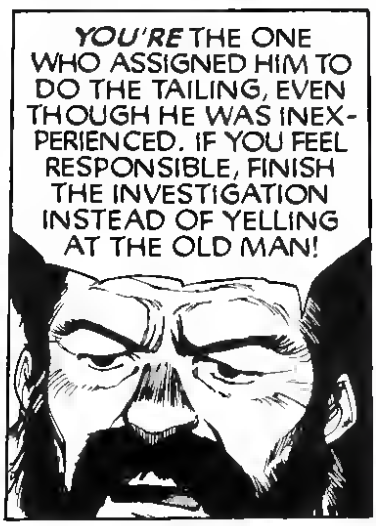
IF THAT DAMN KOIL'S IN SUCH A HURRY, HE'S GOING TO TERMINATE WHOEVER'S TAILING HIM...
...WE'VE GOTTA LET EVERYONE KNOW QUICK, OR ELSE. LET'S HEAD STRAIGHT TO THE UNDERGROUND FACTORY.

BATOU...

BATOU TO CHIEF!
ANSWER ME, YOU ASSHOLE!
BATOU! DON'T!

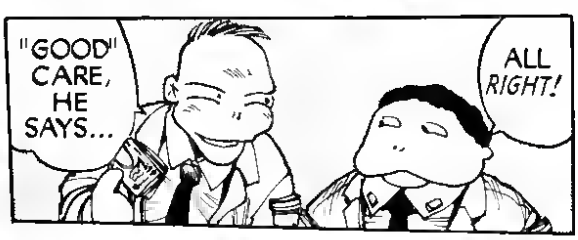
DAMN... TOO LATE!

WHY THE HELL DID YOU HAVE THIS KID RUNNING SOLO, CHIEF!?!
YOU SENILE OLD BASTARD! IF IT'D BEEN TWO-MAN SURVEILLANCE YANO'D STILL BE ALIVE!
ENOUGH! THIS ISN'T GOING TO SOLVE ANY-THING!

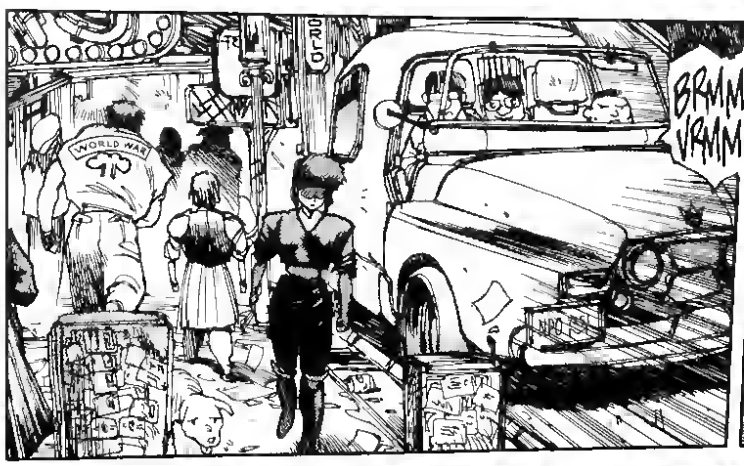

*YOU'RE* THE ONE WHO ASSIGNED HIM TO DO THE TAILING, EVEN THOUGH HE WAS INEX-PERIENCED. IF YOU FEEL RESPONSIBLE, FINISH THE INVESTIGATION INSTEAD OF YELLING AT THE OLD MAN!

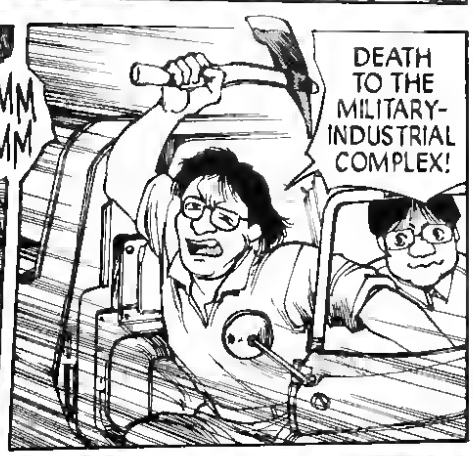
THAT FRIGGING KOIL IS *DEAD MEAT!*
FUCHIKOMA!!
SIR?
GEE, IF YANO'S BROKEN, WHY NOT JUST FIX HIM?

TAKE *GOOD* CARE OF HIM, OKAY?


"GOOD" CARE, HE SAYS...
ALL *RIGHT!*

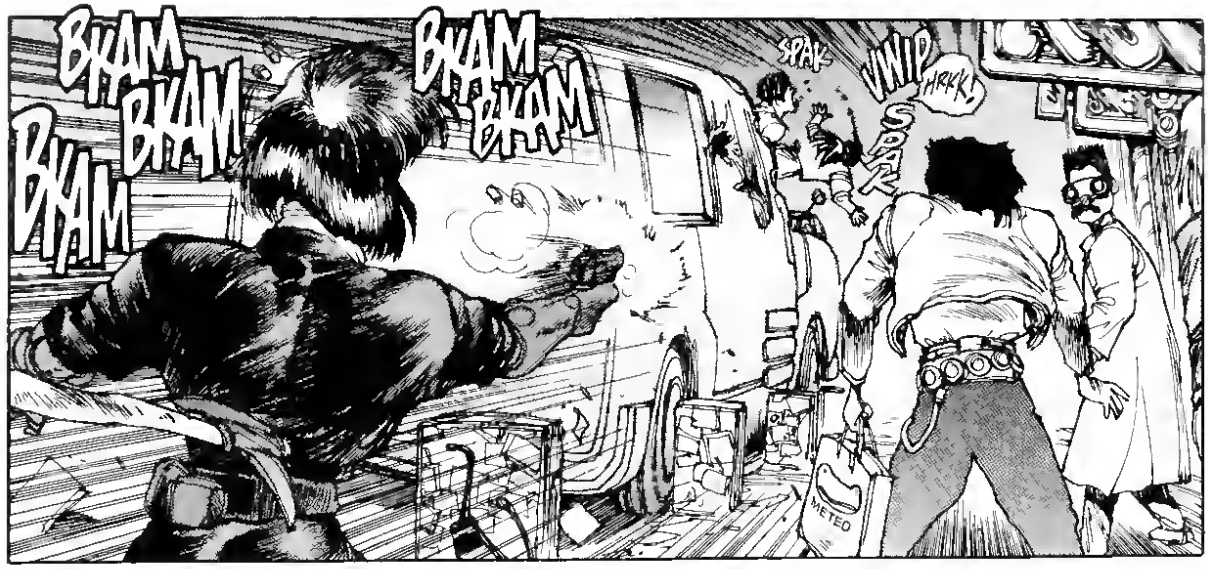
NEWS FLASH APPLESEED AND ORION COLLECTIONS AVAILABLE FROM DARK HORSE. INTRON DEPOT 1 ART BOOK ON SALE
BATTLE SLAVES
SURVIVAL GAMES VICKERS VS KING SOLOMON
STAMINA DRINK 48 HP!
A MASSIVE EMF ATTACK BY TERRORISTS HAS JUST TAKEN PLACE--
BIX
KGM GAME
DAMN BATOU! HE'S GETTING TOO EDGY RECENTLY...
GOOD THING TOGUSA DIDN'T RESPOND...
HEY!
SAGAWA
YA GET OFF?
WEEDO WEEDO
MATHUMIYA
GIRL NIPPON
IN YOUR DREAMS, PAL!!
MAKIN MONEY?
BANK IT IN!

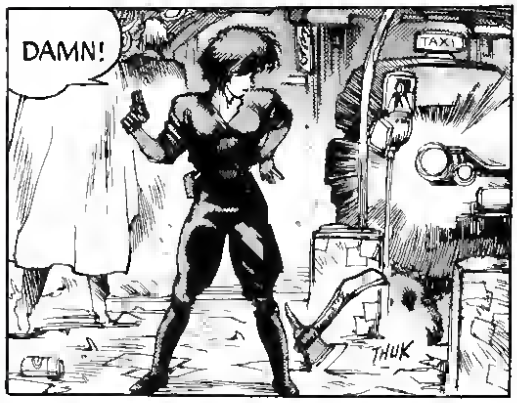

WORLD WAR
BRMMM VRMMM


DEATH TO THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX!

THWCK

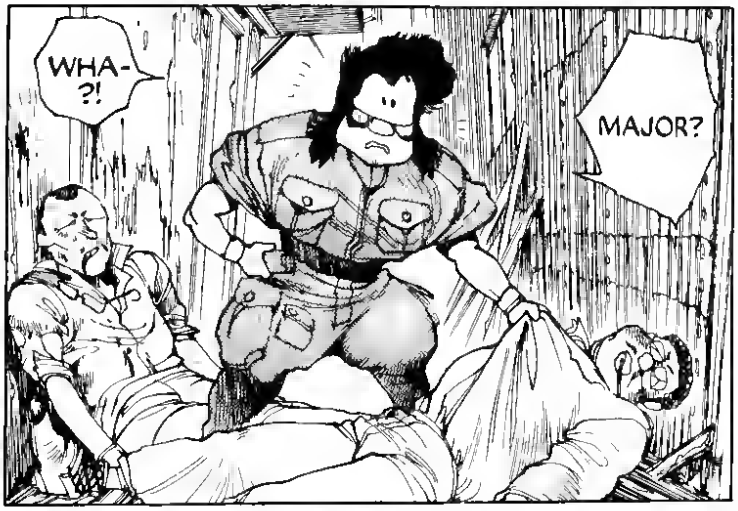
!
JKSH


BKAM
BKAM
BKAM
BKAM
BKAM
SPAK
VWIP
HRKK!
SPAK
METED

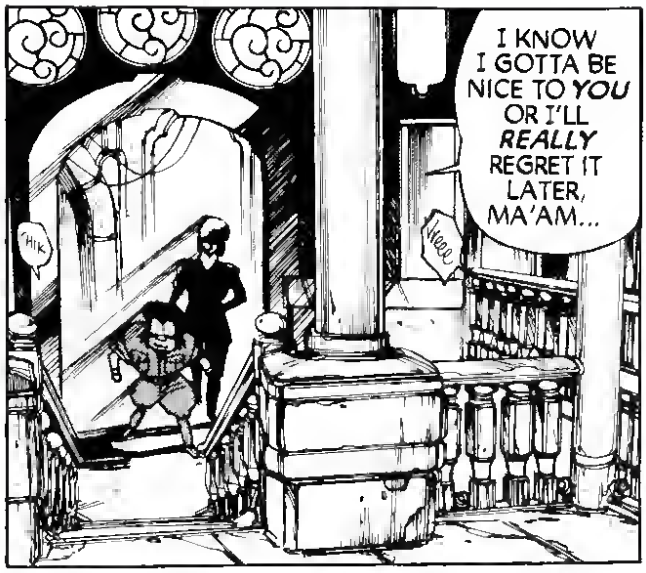

DAMN!
TAXI
THUK

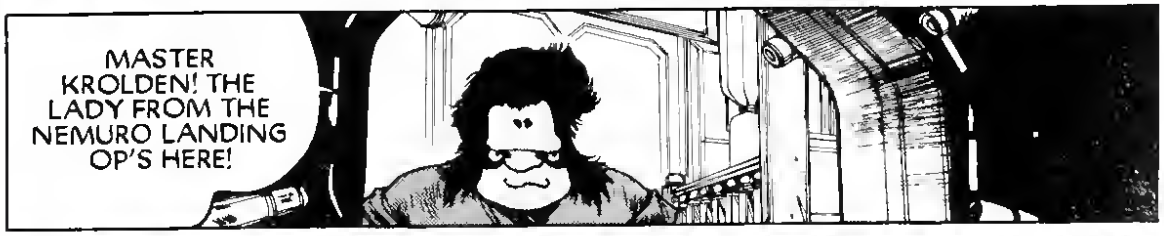
HEY, BABE-- I COULD GIVE YUH A CHEAP, NEW SKIN JOB...
BUG OFF, CREEP.
WHAPAK

VZZT
HOUSE DRAGON
HEY!
snapp
WHAK
KLUD
HRAK


WHA-?!
MAJOR?

YOU REMEM-BER ME?
I HEARD A RUMOR THE HACKER *KROLDEN'S* STILL WORKING BACK HERE. IS IT TRUE?



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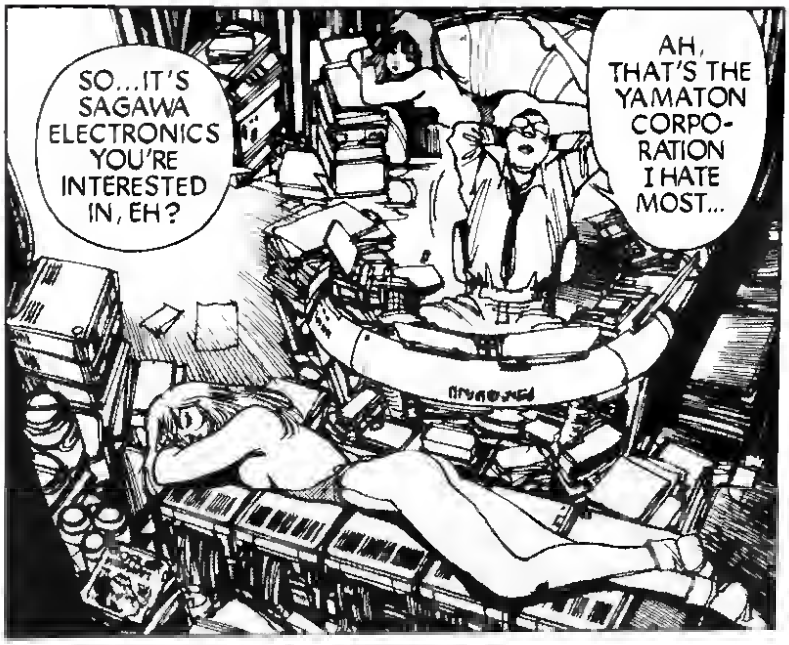

SO...IT'S SAGAWA ELECTRONICS YOU'RE INTERESTED IN, EH?
AH, THAT'S THE YAMATON CORPO-RATION I HATE MOST...

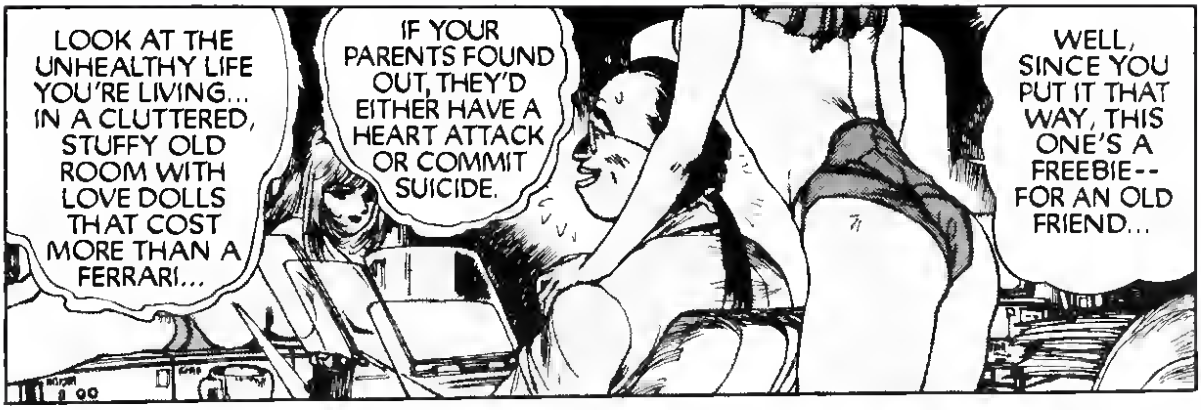
THEY WERE THE FIRST AND BIGGEST VULTURES TO SWOOP IN HERE WHEN THE SOVIETS RETURNED THE NORTHERN ISLANDS...
FRANKLY, MY FRIENDS AND I DON'T EVEN RECOGNIZE A "RETURN" THAT EXCLUDES ALL THOSE MILITARY BASES...
beep

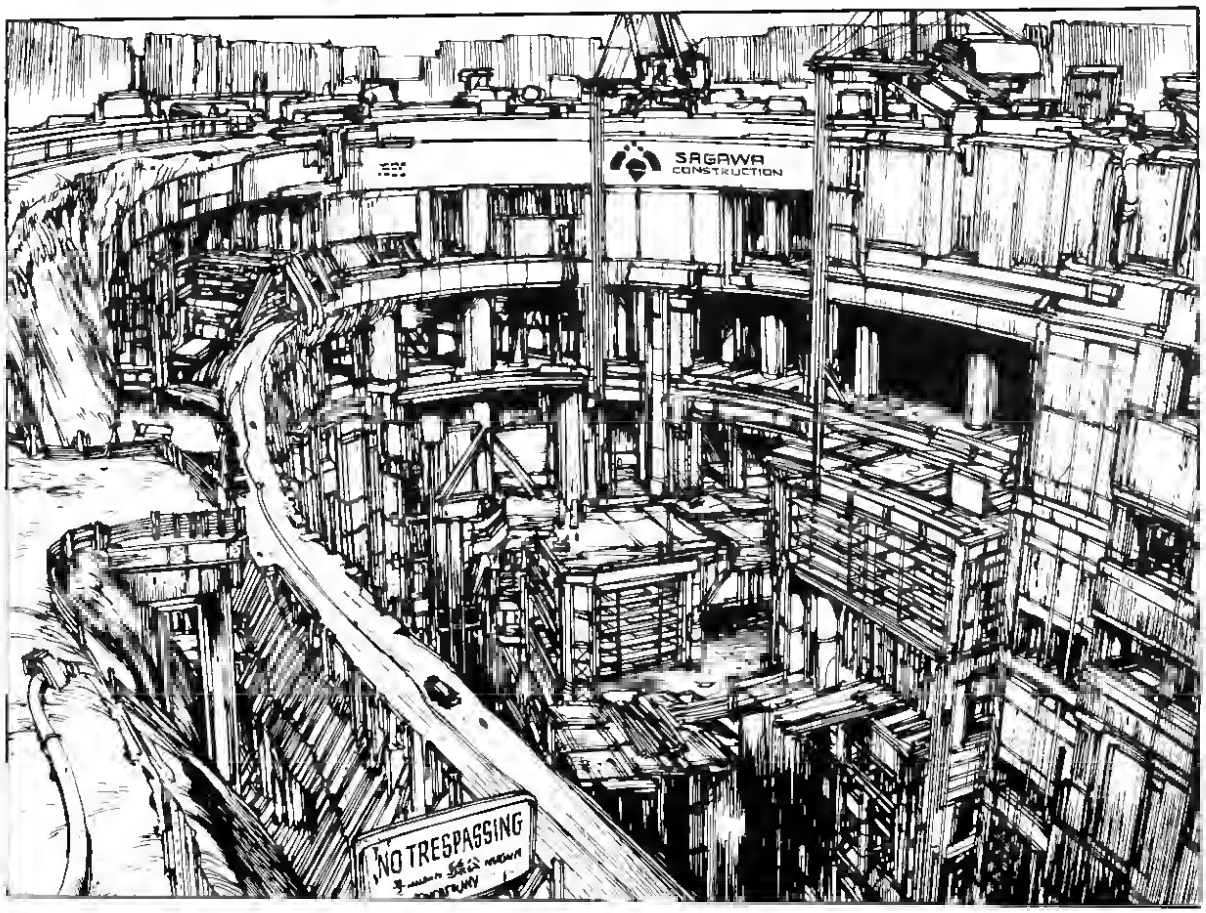
SURE, I KNOW THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT COALITION HAD INTRO-DUCED A FAILED TAX POLICY, THAT THERE WAS A PUBLIC REACTION TO IT, AND THAT THE OPPOSITION JUST HAPPENED TO NEED SOME SORT OF "EVENT" TO GAIN POWER...
beep
tak takka tak
...I ALSO KNOW THE SOVIETS WANTED CLOSER LINKS TO JAPAN BECAUSE THEIR ENTRY INTO THE *EC* MARKET THROUGH THE GERMAN CONNECTION HADN'T PRODUCED THE HOPED-FOR ECONOMIC BENEFITS...
FZZK
beep
vvee

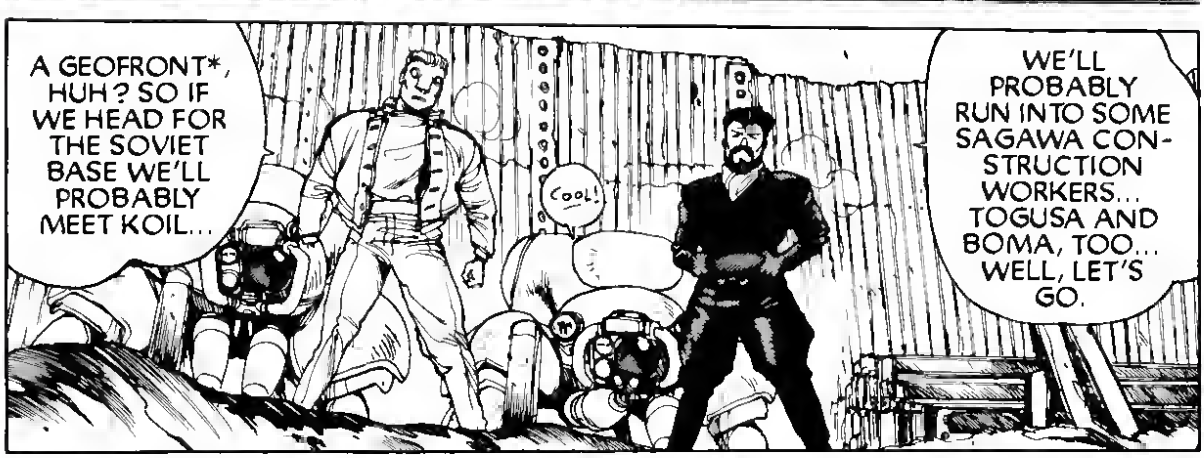
OH, YEAH, AND THE MOSLEMS HAD SLOWLY BEEN APPLYING PRESSURE ON THE SOVIETS FROM THE SOUTH...
bop
AH, HERE WE GO! ACCESS!

OKAY, GOT A DIRECT LINK TO THE HEAD OF SECURITY'S BRAIN AT SAGAWA ELECTRONICS HEADQUAR-TERS.
SO, YOU WANT A MAP OF THE SECUR-ITY NET? AN ALL-AREAS PASS CARD?

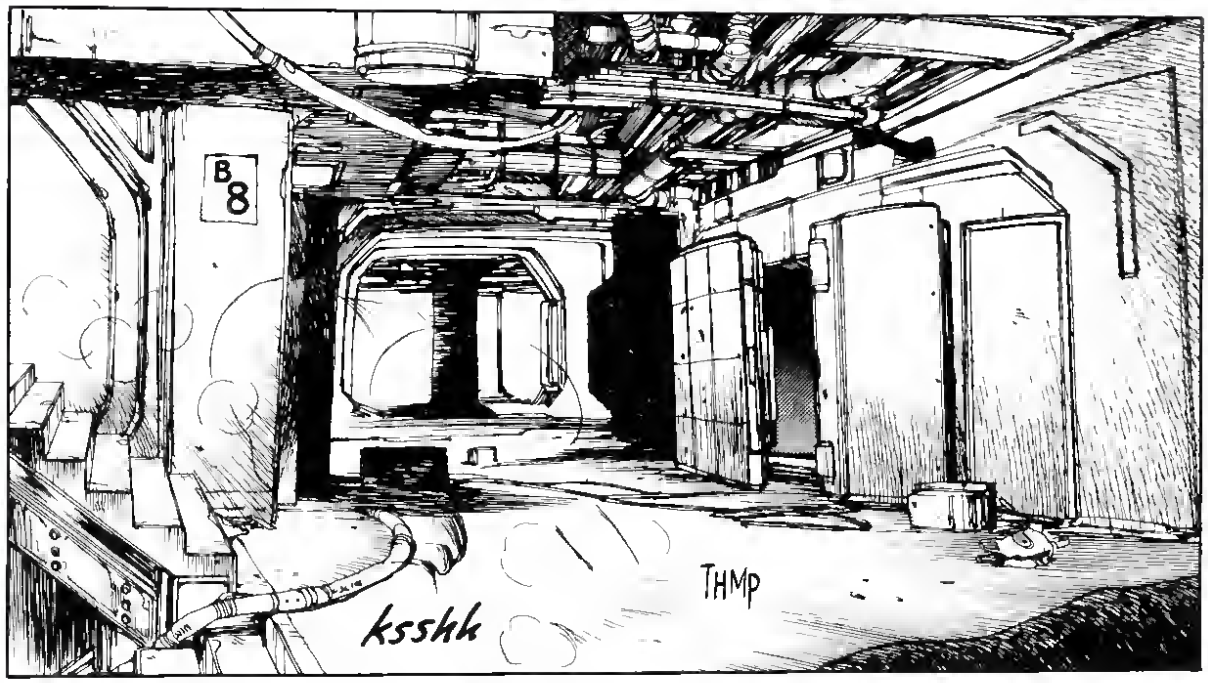
KROLDEN, YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE QUIT YOUR JOB AT THE CABINET *PR* OFFICE...
THAT A COMPLI-MENT?

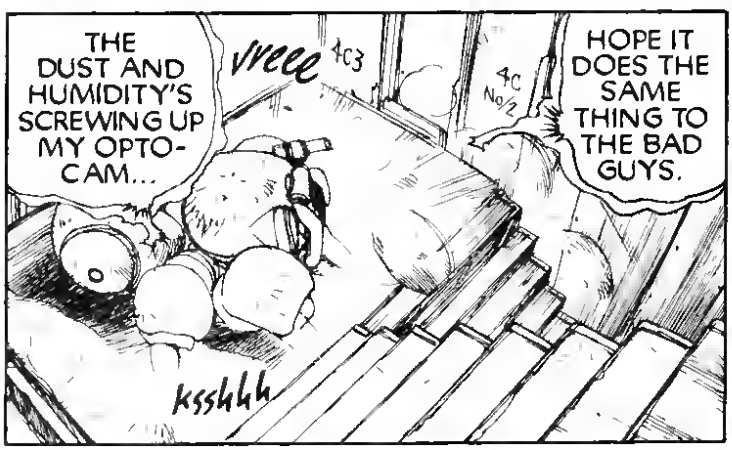


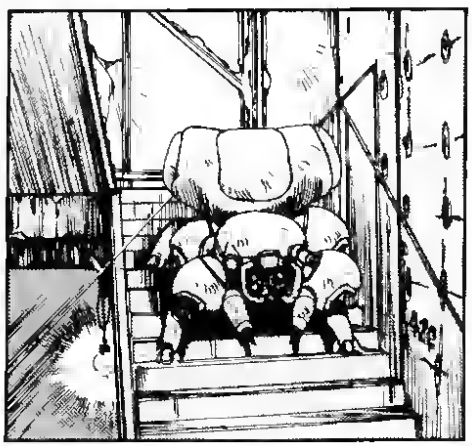



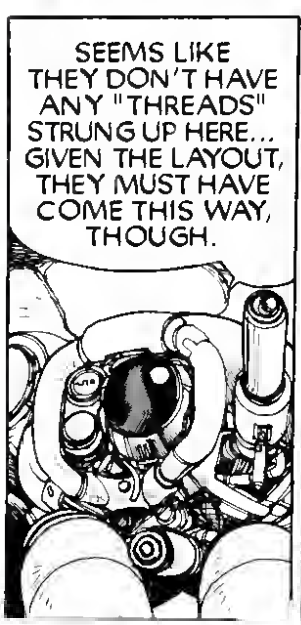




* A DEEP SUBTERRANEAN DEVELOPMENT

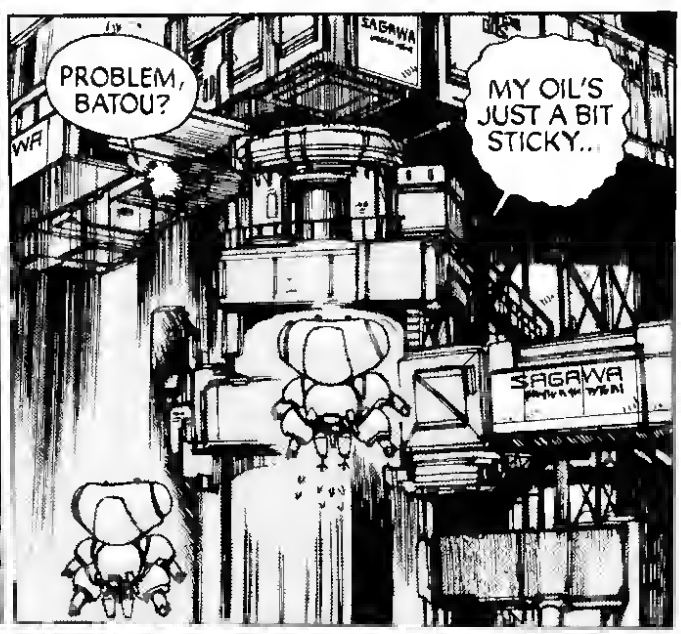

B 8
ksshh
THMP

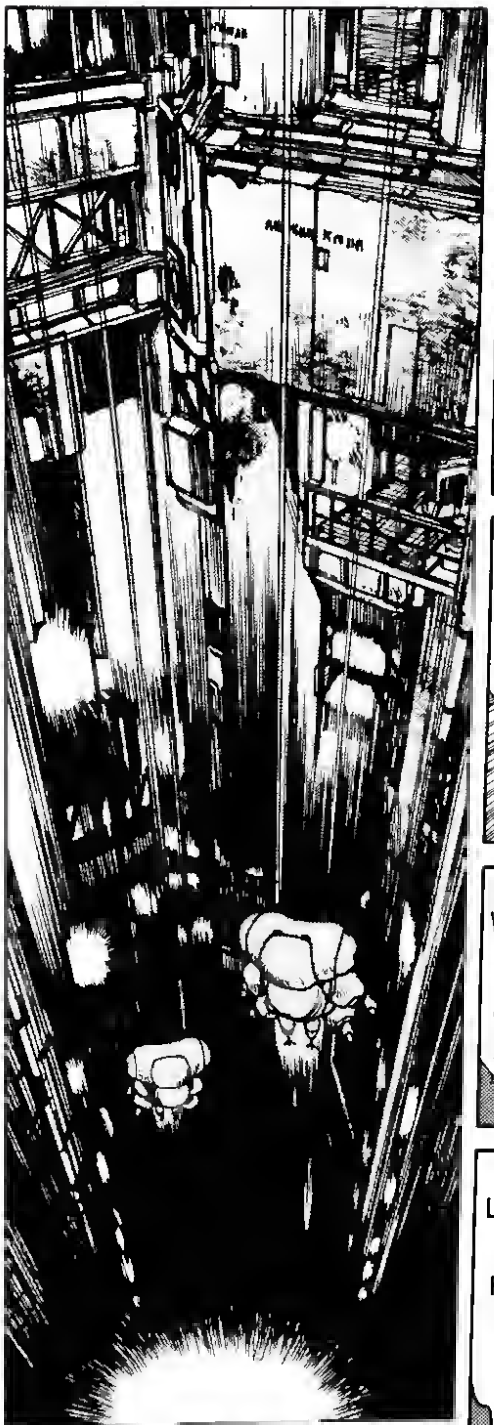

THE DUST AND HUMIDITY'S SCREWING UP MY OPTO-CAM...
vreee
4C3
4C No/2
HOPE IT DOES THE SAME THING TO THE BAD GUYS.
ksshhh

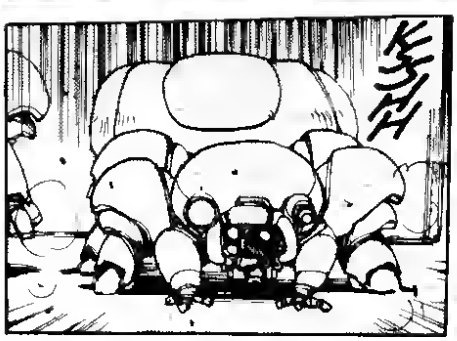


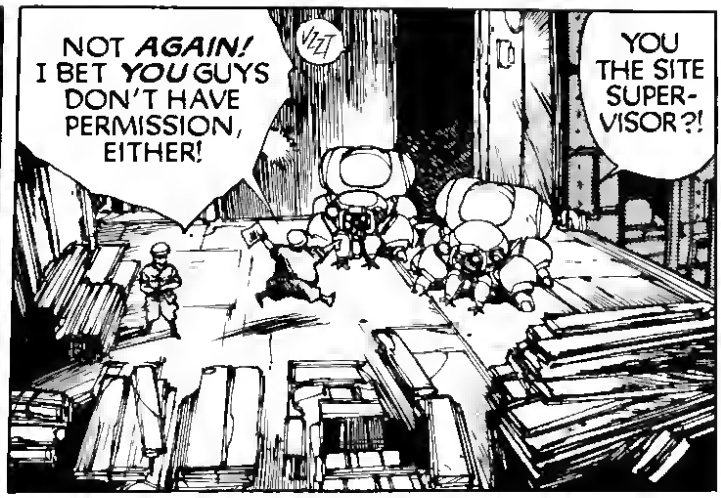

SEEMS LIKE THEY DON'T HAVE ANY "THREADS" STRUNG UP HERE... GIVEN THE LAYOUT, THEY MUST HAVE COME THIS WAY, THOUGH.

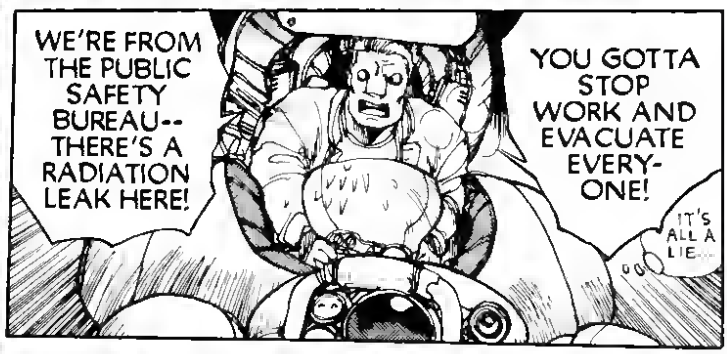
LET'S MOVE STRAIGHT TO THE EXPANDED ZONE!


PROBLEM, BATOU?
MY OIL'S JUST A BIT STICKY...
SAGAWA
SAGAWA



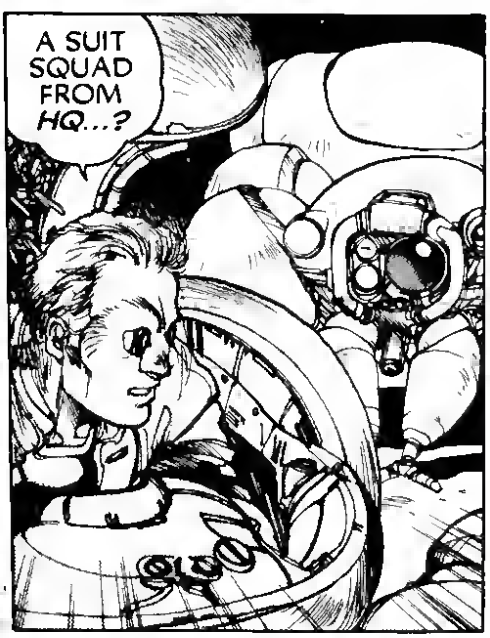

KSHH


NOT *AGAIN!* I BET *YOU* GUYS DON'T HAVE PERMISSION, EITHER!
VZZT
YOU THE SITE SUPER-VISOR?!


WE'RE FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY BUREAU-- THERE'S A RADIATION LEAK HERE!
YOU GOTTA STOP WORK AND EVACUATE EVERY-ONE!
IT'S ALL A LIE...

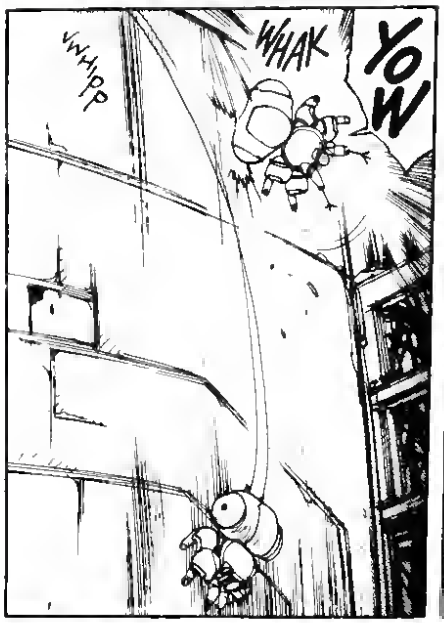
WH-WH-WHAT?!
SHOCKED
YOU SAID "EITHER" EARLIER! WHO ELSE HAS COME DOWN HERE?!

ONE PAIR LIKE YOU, A SIX-MAN SUIT SQUAD FROM HQ, AND SOME FOREIGNERS WHO LOOKED LIKE BUREAU-CRATS. GOTTA GO NOW!

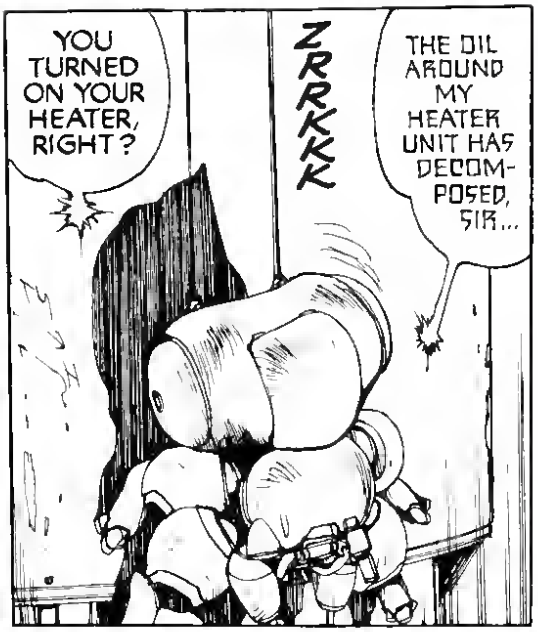

A SUIT SQUAD FROM *HQ...?*

LET'S MOVE OR WE'RE UP THE CREEK!
ROGER!
whsshh

THEY'RE REALLY GOING AT IT!
SPAK
WHDD
BLAM


WHAK
YOW
WHIPP

WHAT'S GOIN' ON WITH THIS JUNK HEAP?!
THE BRAKE UNIT ON MY "THREAD" HAS SEIZED, SIR...


YOU TURNED ON YOUR HEATER, RIGHT?
ZRRKKK
THE OIL AROUND MY HEATER UNIT HAS DECOMPOSED, SIR...

YAIEE!
BOOM

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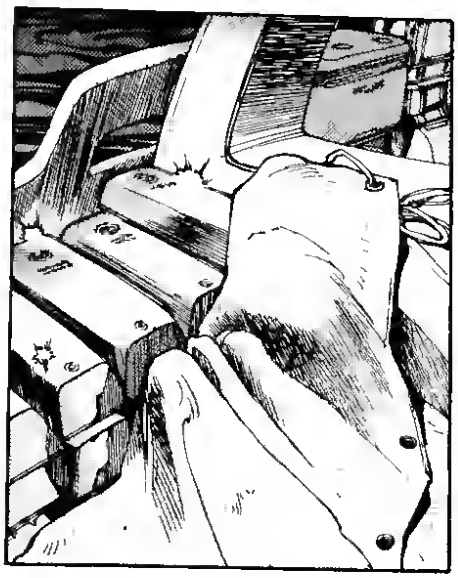
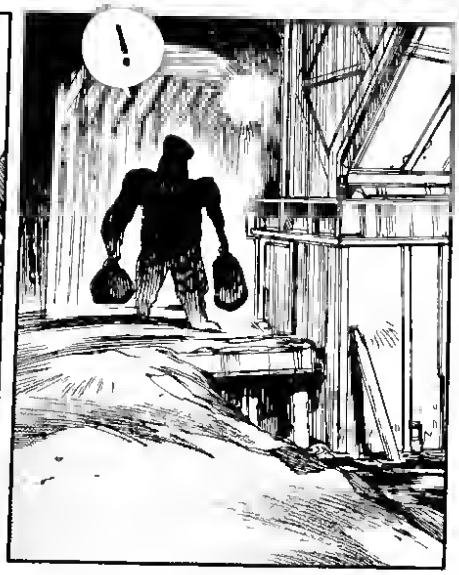
VZZT
WHSSH
KBOOM
SKSSHHHH

KSSH



GOLD ?!


!

THUDD
KLANK
FWHAP
!
KLAK
HYA!
WHSST
WHDD
FWDD

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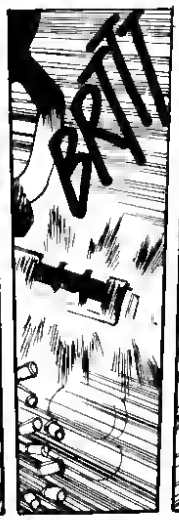
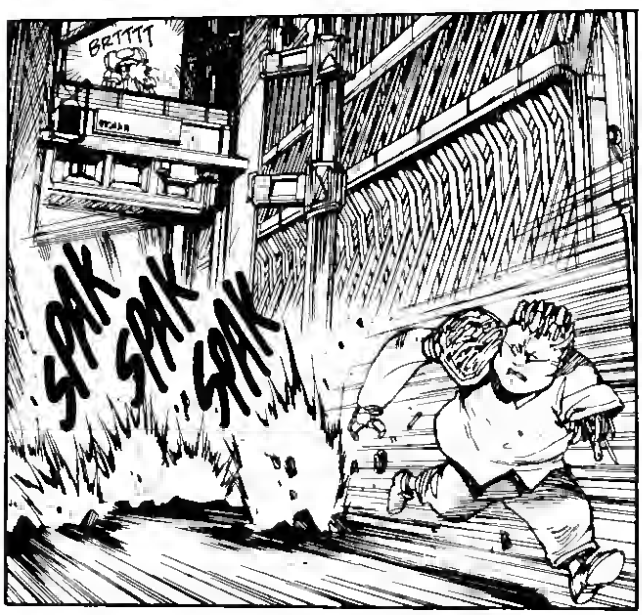
KRK
BAM BAM BAM
SHIT!

THERE'S GOTTA BE TWO MORE 'BOTS AROUND...
LEAVE ONE ALIVE.
KSHH

!


BRTT

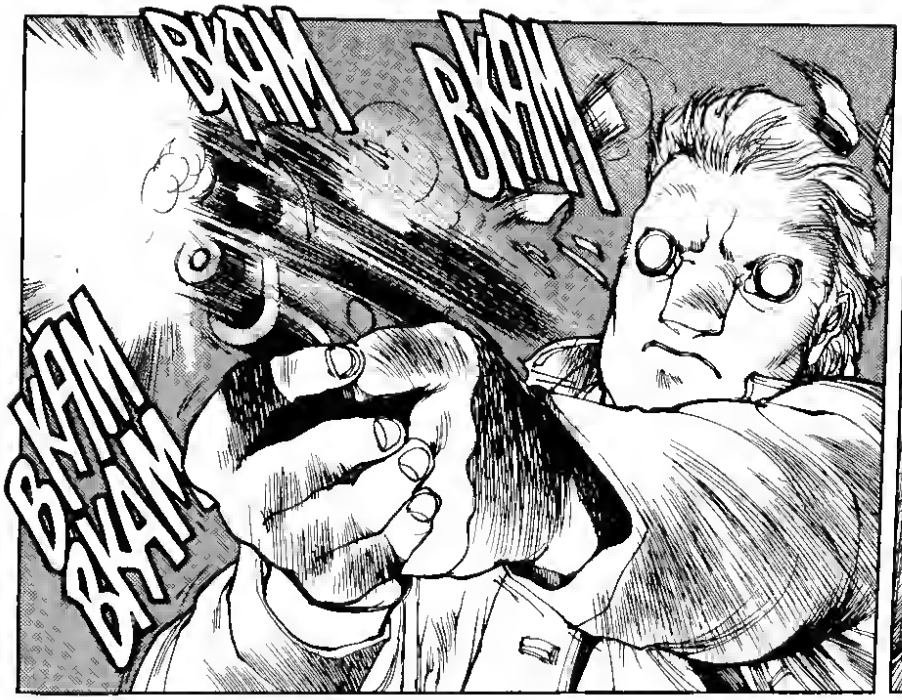
SPAK SPAK SPAK SPAK
YAIEE!

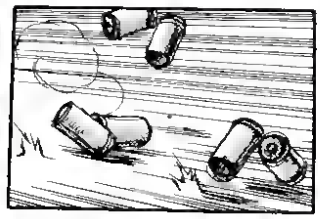

BRTTTT
SPAK SPAK SPAK

GOD DAMN IT! NOW WHO THE HELL'S SHOOTING?!

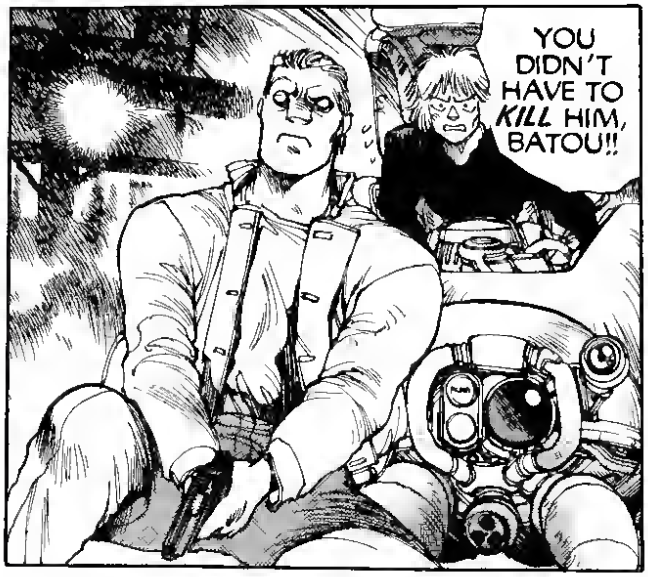
SPANG

BATOU! YOU OKAY?!
NSHHANG
!
KOIL!
STOP OR I'LL SHOOT!
KOIIIIIL!!!

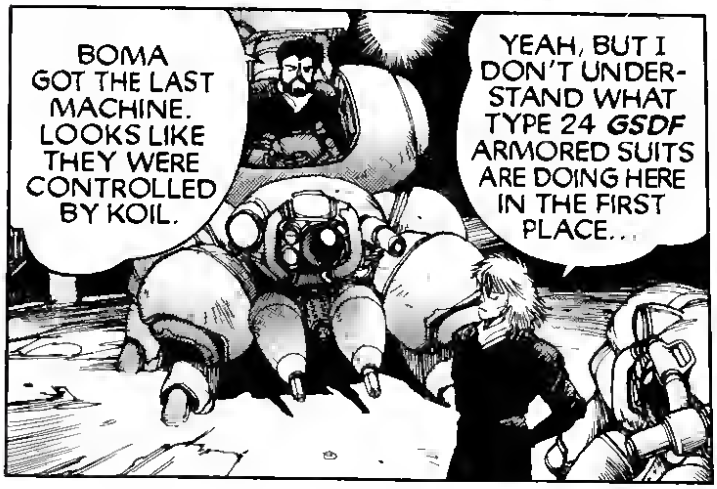

BKAM
BKAM
BKAM
BKAM



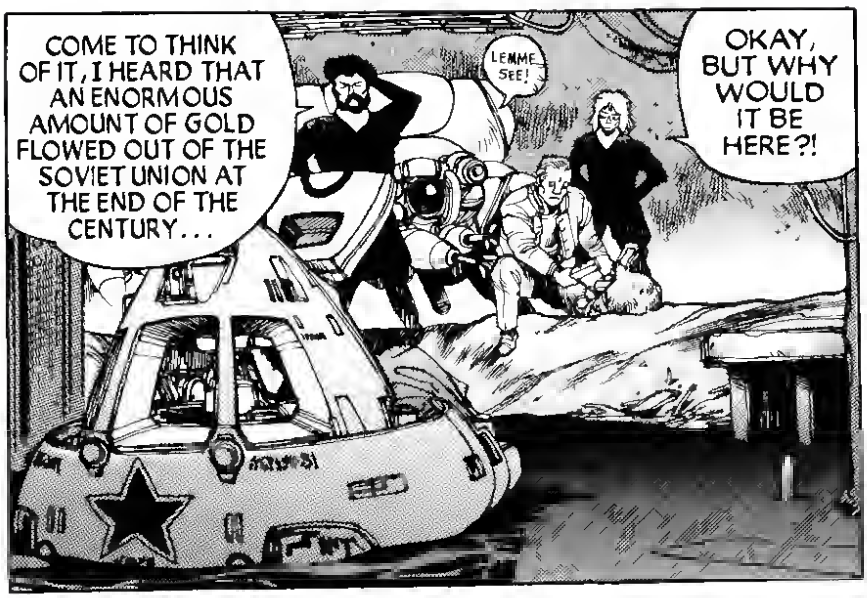
FWOO


YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO *KILL* HIM, BATOU!!

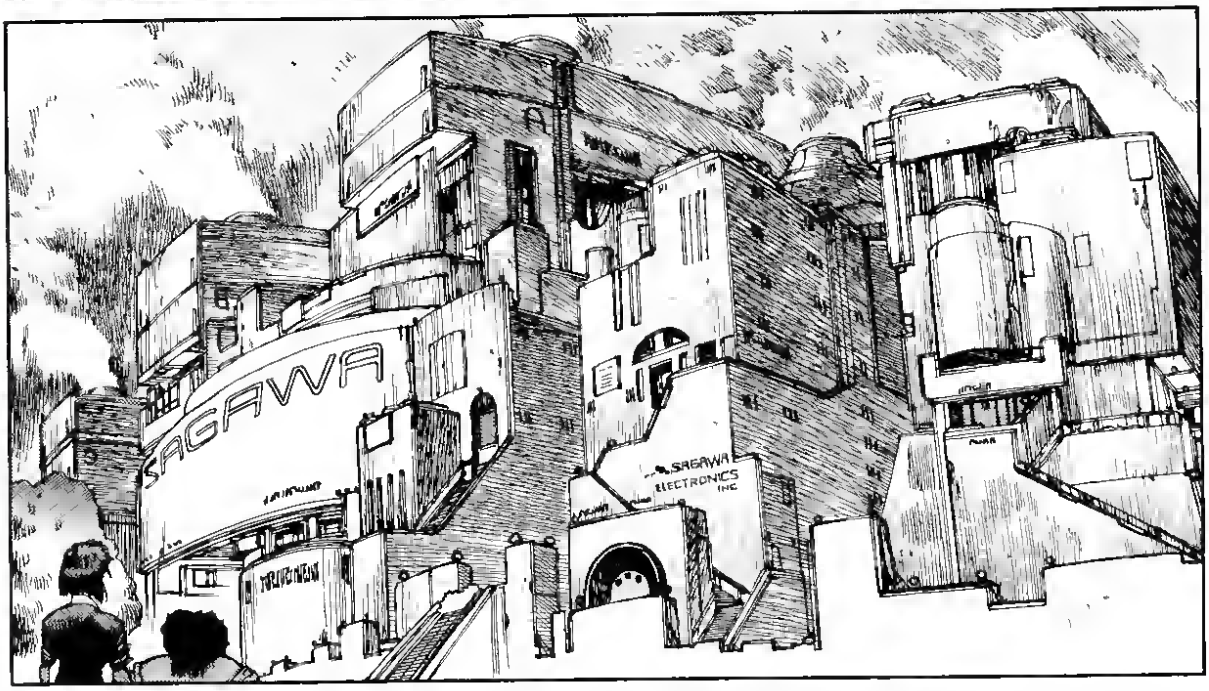
DEAD MEN DON'T TALK... OR NAME NAMES WE NEED...
I KNOW THAT, YOU STUPID ASSHOLE!

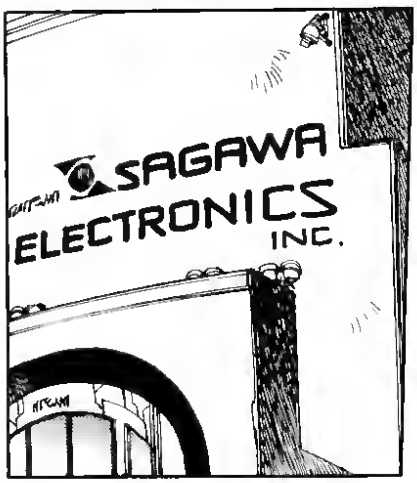

BOMA GOT THE LAST MACHINE. LOOKS LIKE THEY WERE CONTROLLED BY KOIL.
YEAH, BUT I DON'T UNDER-STAND WHAT TYPE 24 *GSDF* ARMORED SUITS ARE DOING HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE...

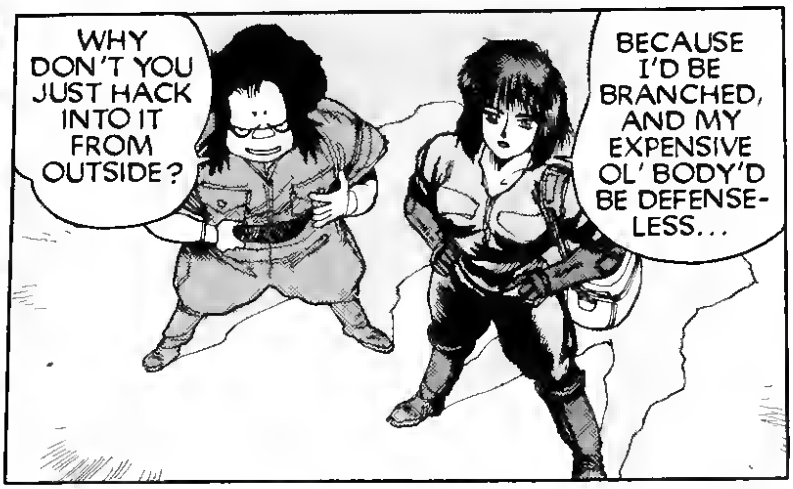
JUST 'CAUSE THEY MAKE 'EM HERE DOESN'T MEAN THEY SHOULD USE THEM...
THOSE ARE REAL GROUND SELF-DEFENSE FORCES MACHINES, ALL RIGHT... BRAINWASH 'EM AND THEY'RE STILL CLUMSY.


COME TO THINK OF IT, I HEARD THAT AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF GOLD FLOWED OUT OF THE SOVIET UNION AT THE END OF THE CENTURY...
LEMME SEE!
OKAY, BUT WHY WOULD IT BE HERE?!

AND WHY DID SAGAWA ELECTRONICS AND THE *GSDF* KNOW ABOUT IT?
WHAT THE HELL ARE ALL THESE GOLD BARS?


SAGAWA
SAGAWA ELECTRONICS INC


SAGAWA
ELECTRONICS
INC.

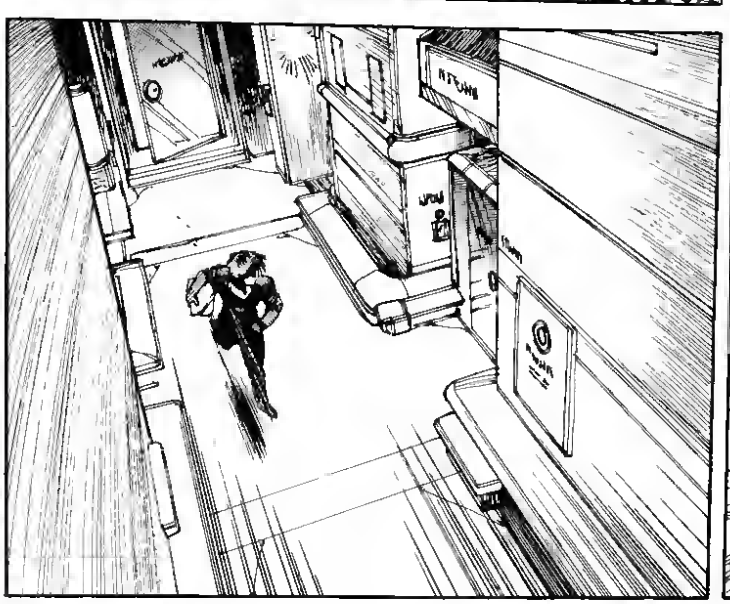

WHY DON'T YOU JUST HACK INTO IT FROM OUTSIDE?
BECAUSE I'D BE BRANCHED, AND MY EXPENSIVE OL' BODY'D BE DEFENSE-LESS...

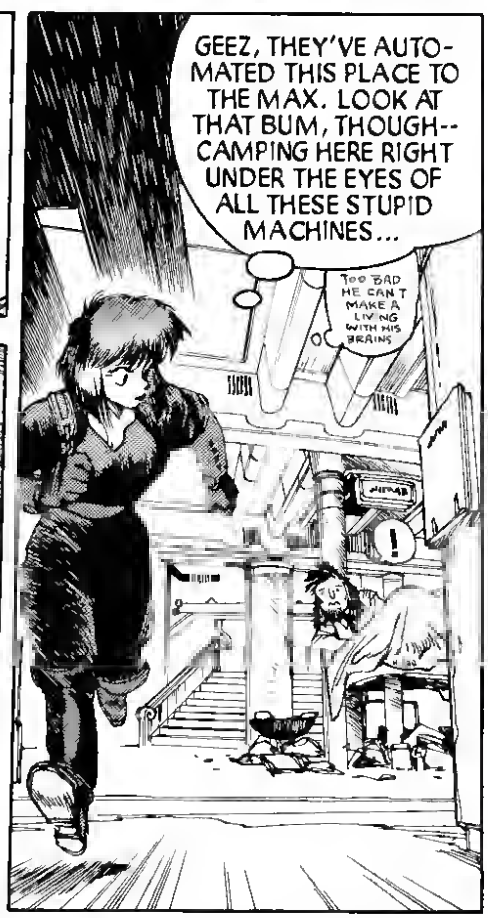
BE CAREFUL, MA'AM...

I WILL.

HI! I'M THE PHOTOGRAPHER FOR THE ANNUAL REPORT. I'VE GOT A PASS FOR THE SHOOT BUT I JUST CAME TODAY TO CHECK OUT THE LOCATION...
YOU CAN GO RIGHT ON INTO THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE...

SAY, CHIEF, HAVE WE GOT A PHOTOGRAPHER SCHEDULED FOR TODAY IN THE SECURITY LOG?
ARE YOU LOSING YOUR MARBLES? THAT'S THE DAUGHTER OF THE MAN FROM KAMIZAWA PHOTO STUDIO. HE'S BEEN COMING HERE FOR FORTY YEARS.




GEEZ, THEY'VE AUTOMATED THIS PLACE TO THE MAX. LOOK AT THAT BUM, THOUGH--CAMPING HERE RIGHT UNDER THE EYES OF ALL THESE STUPID MACHINES...
TOO BAD HE CAN'T MAKE A LIVING WITH HIS BRAINS
!

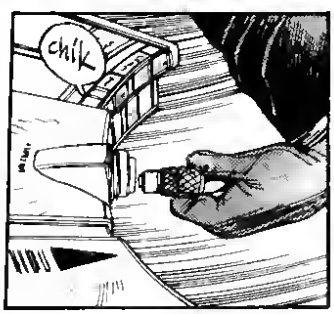
WONDER IF I SHOULD BREAK INTO THE INFORMATION PROCESSING CENTER, OR THE MEMORY MANAGEMENT CENTER....
HMM... I'D BETTER DIRECTLY INFILTRATE A COUPLE CHIEF EXECS' BRAINS... IT'D BE FASTER...
WHA-?!
SECTION 4
ATTENTION, PERSON EXHIBITING SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR AT INTER-SECTION 9972.
PLEASE SHOW YOUR I.D. AND PASS!
WELL, I... ER...
DAMN!
SQUEE!
SECURITY
BKAM BKAM
squee?
AND AFTER I WENT TO ALL THAT TROUBLE TO GET A FREE PASS... WHAT AN IDIOT I AM...
MAYBE I'D BETTER LEAVE THIS PART OUT OF MY REPORT...

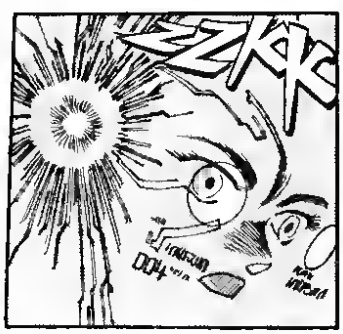
WHAMM
KANG
BKAM BKAM
WHUD!
LISTEN TO ME! THERE'S NO RADIATION LEAK, SO DO AS I SAY!
IF YOU WANT TO KEEP YOUR JOB, PATCH THE DEMOLITION CHARGES OVER TO ME! I'M GOING TO BLOW THE WHOLE SECTION!
WHAM
!
DON'T MOVE!
PUT YOUR HANDS WHERE--
tak takka beep!
BKAM BKAM

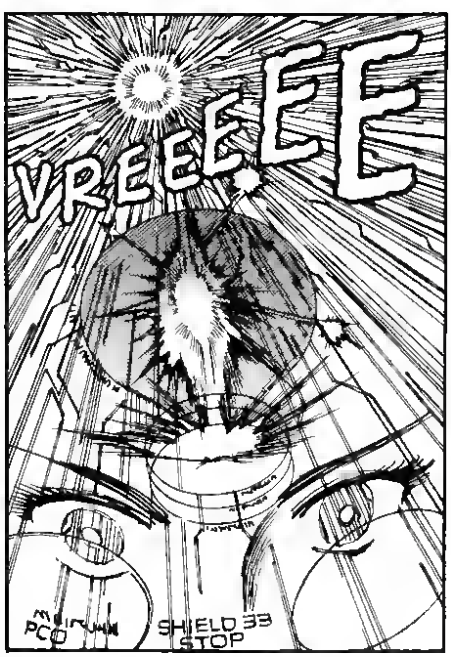
!

A ROBOT!
Ssssh
kssshh
kssshh

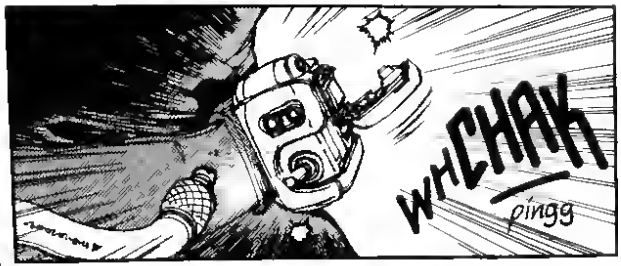
WHAT'S HE CONNECTED TO?
zzzzk

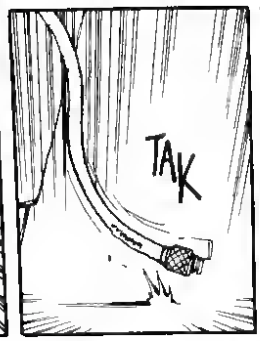

chik

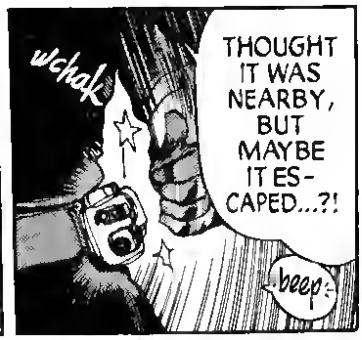

zzkk

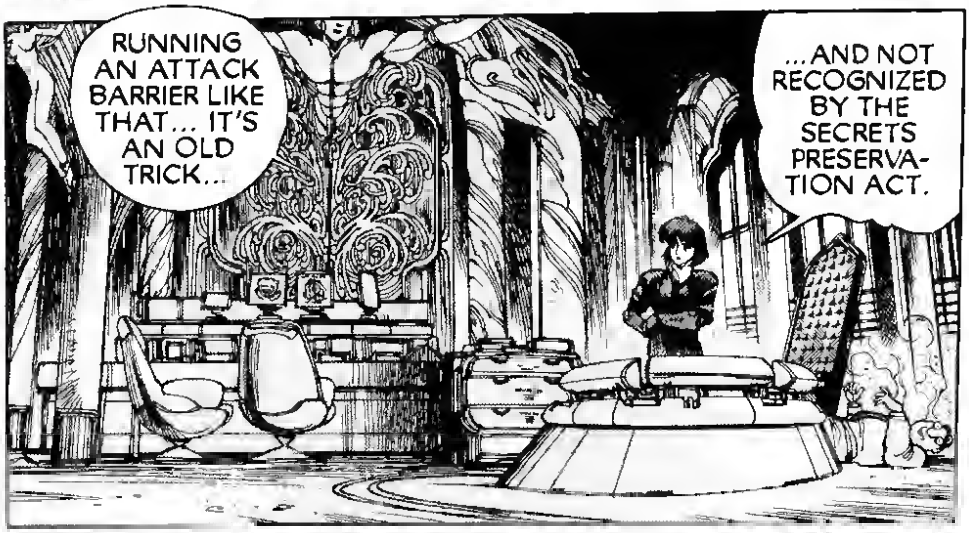

VREEEEE
PCD
SHIELD 33
STOP

Whoops.
SPZZKK


WHCHAK
pingg

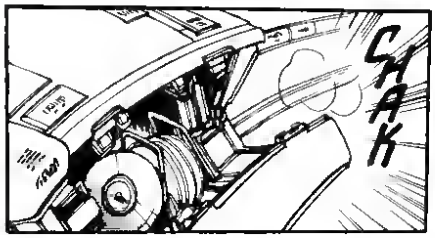

TAK


wchak
THOUGHT IT WAS NEARBY, BUT MAYBE IT ES-CAPED...?!
beep


RUNNING AN ATTACK BARRIER LIKE THAT... IT'S AN OLD TRICK...
...AND NOT RECOGNIZED BY THE SECRETS PRESERVA-TION ACT.

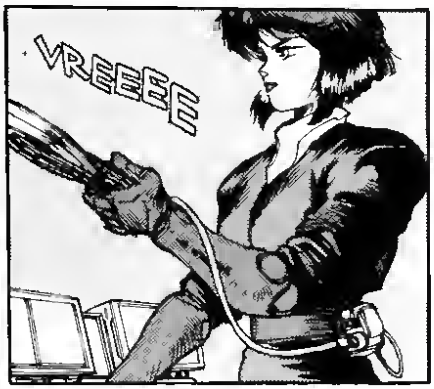
BUT I WONDER WHAT HE WAS TRYING TO DO AT THE LAST MINUTE...?

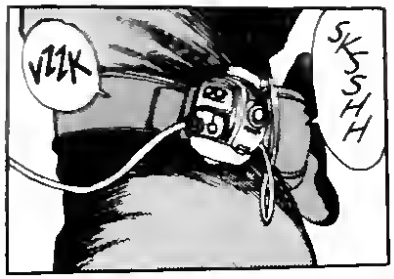
beep
takka takka
beep

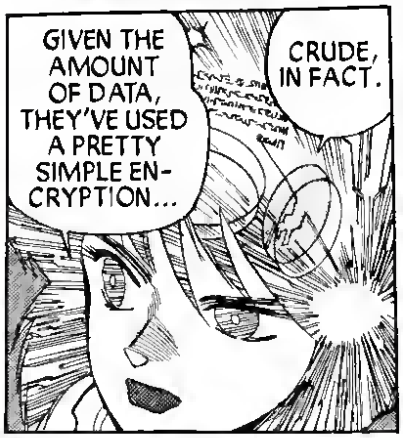

CHAK

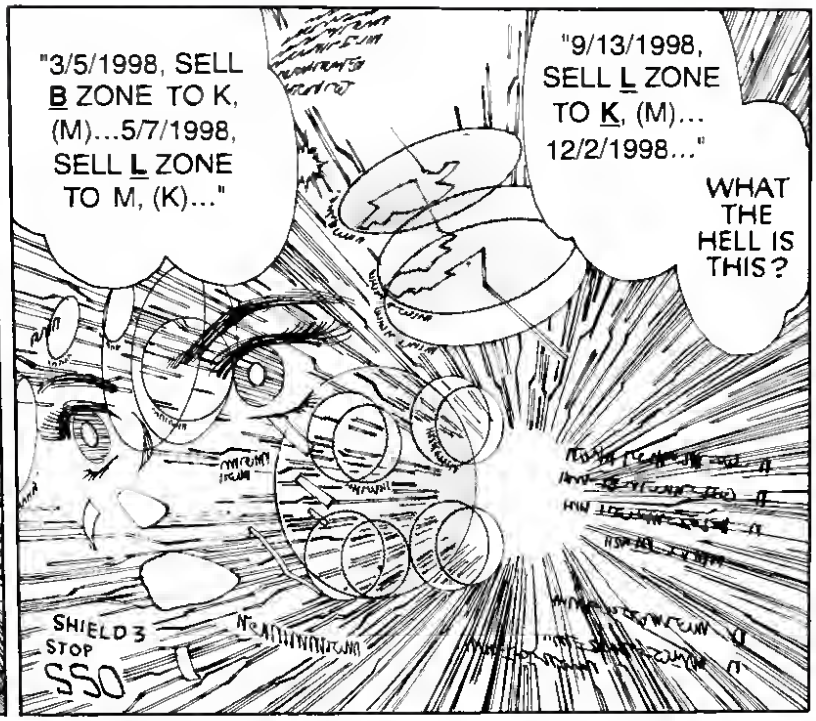
HMM. SO HE WAS TRYING TO ERASE THESE DISKS... NOTHING FANCY.

CLK

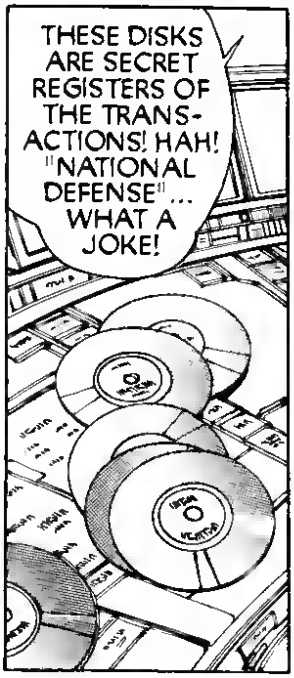

VREEEE


VZZK
SKSSHH


GIVEN THE AMOUNT OF DATA, THEY'VE USED A PRETTY SIMPLE EN-CRYPTION...
CRUDE, IN FACT.


"3/5/1998, SELL B ZONE TO K, (M)...5/7/1998, SELL L ZONE TO M, (K)..."
"9/13/1998, SELL L ZONE TO K, (M)... 12/2/1998..."
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?
SHIELD 3 STOP
SSO

HMM... SELLING LAND AROUND THE SOVIET BASE... AND "M" MUST BE "MARLOV!"
IT'S A CONSPIRACY BETWEEN MARLOV AND "K", TO USE PUBLIC FUNDS TO LINE THEIR OWN POCKETS UNDER THE PRETEXT OF DEFENSE! AND THAT MEANS "K" IS PROBABLY...


THESE DISKS ARE SECRET REGISTERS OF THE TRANS-ACTIONS! HAH! "NATIONAL DEFENSE"... WHAT A JOKE!

?!

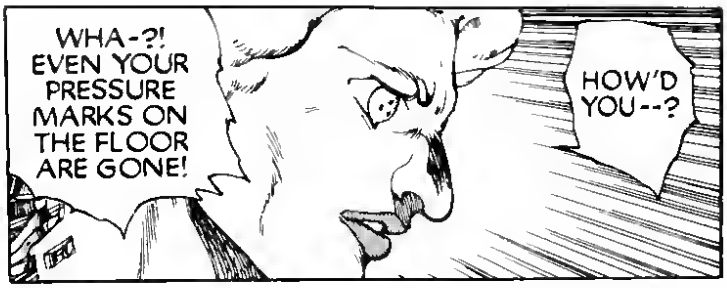
CHAK!

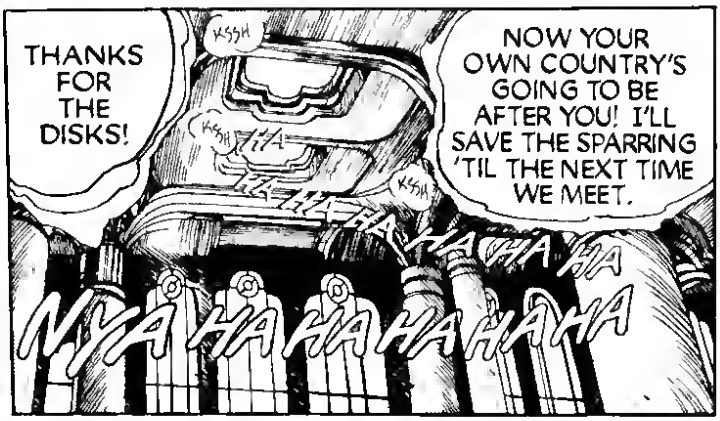
SPRAKK
BKAM
BKAM

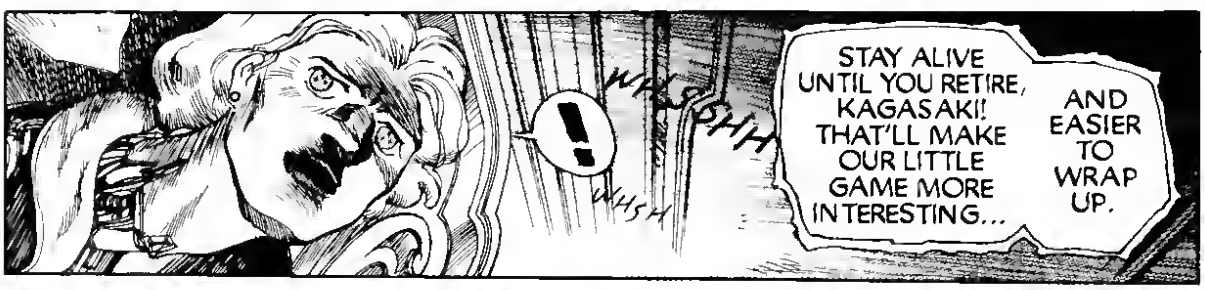
YOU'VE GOT A PRETTY TOUGH SKULL...
BUT I'M AFRAID I'M GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE IT APART FOR FURTHER STUDY, LT. KUSANAGI!

CHAK
JUST YOU TRY... LT. COLONEL SOHEI KAGASAKI, SPECIAL OP FOR THE FAR NORTH...!

AND JUST *FYI*, I'M NO LONGER A LIEUTENANT...
IT'S *MAJOR* KUSANAGI TO YOU...!
VZZT

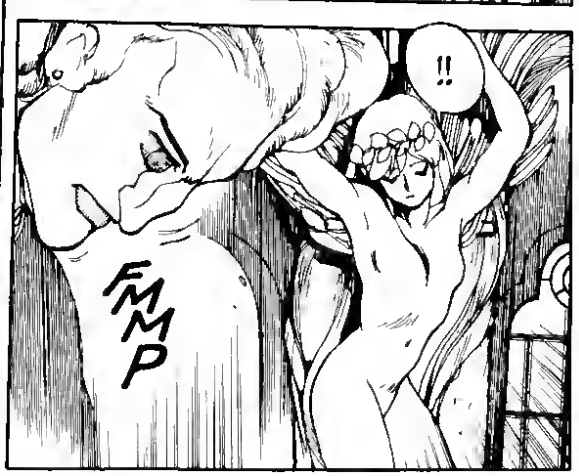

WHA-?! EVEN YOUR PRESSURE MARKS ON THE FLOOR ARE GONE!
HOW'D YOU--?

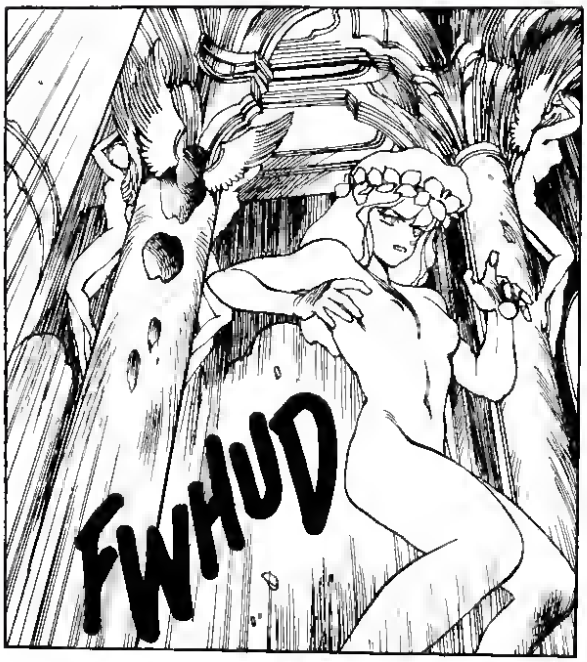

THANKS FOR THE DISKS!
KSSH
KSSH
KSSH
NOW YOUR OWN COUNTRY'S GOING TO BE AFTER YOU! I'LL SAVE THE SPARRING 'TIL THE NEXT TIME WE MEET.
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
NYA HA HA HA HA HA HA

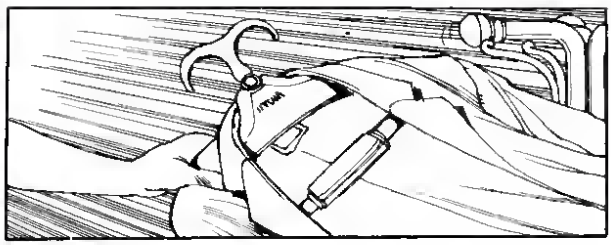

!
WHSSHH
WHSSH
STAY ALIVE UNTIL YOU RETIRE, KAGASAKI! THAT'LL MAKE OUR LITTLE GAME MORE INTERESTING...
AND EASIER TO WRAP UP.

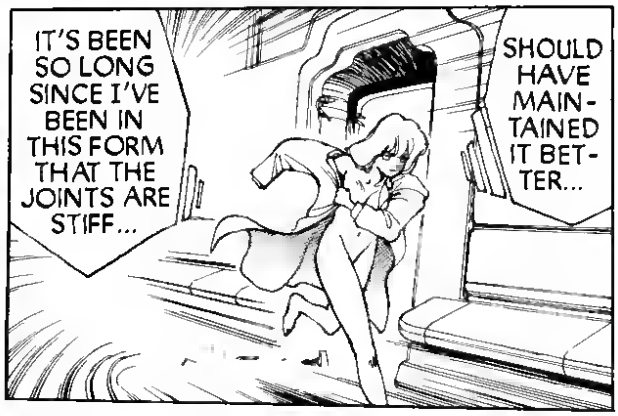
....

YOU'RE ON THE WALL, AREN'T YOU?!
COME TO THINK OF IT, I'D BETTER SCRAM, TOO...


!!
FMMP


FWHUD

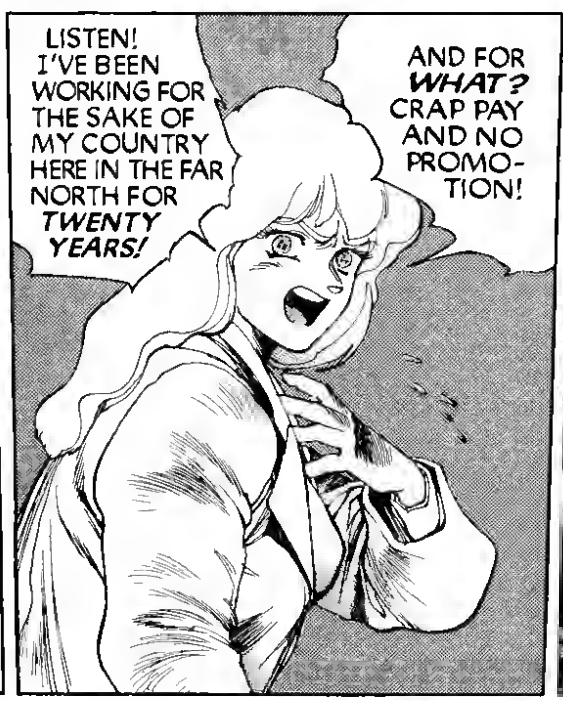



IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE BEEN IN THIS FORM THAT THE JOINTS ARE STIFF...
SHOULD HAVE MAIN-TAINED IT BET-TER...

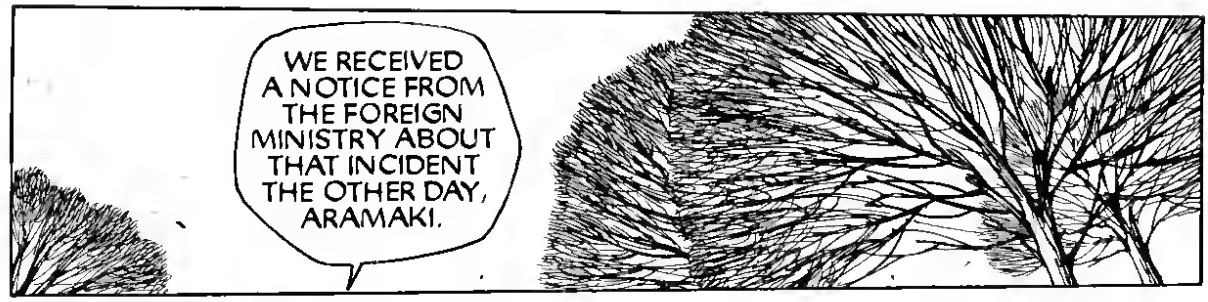
WELL, WELL, WELL.
!

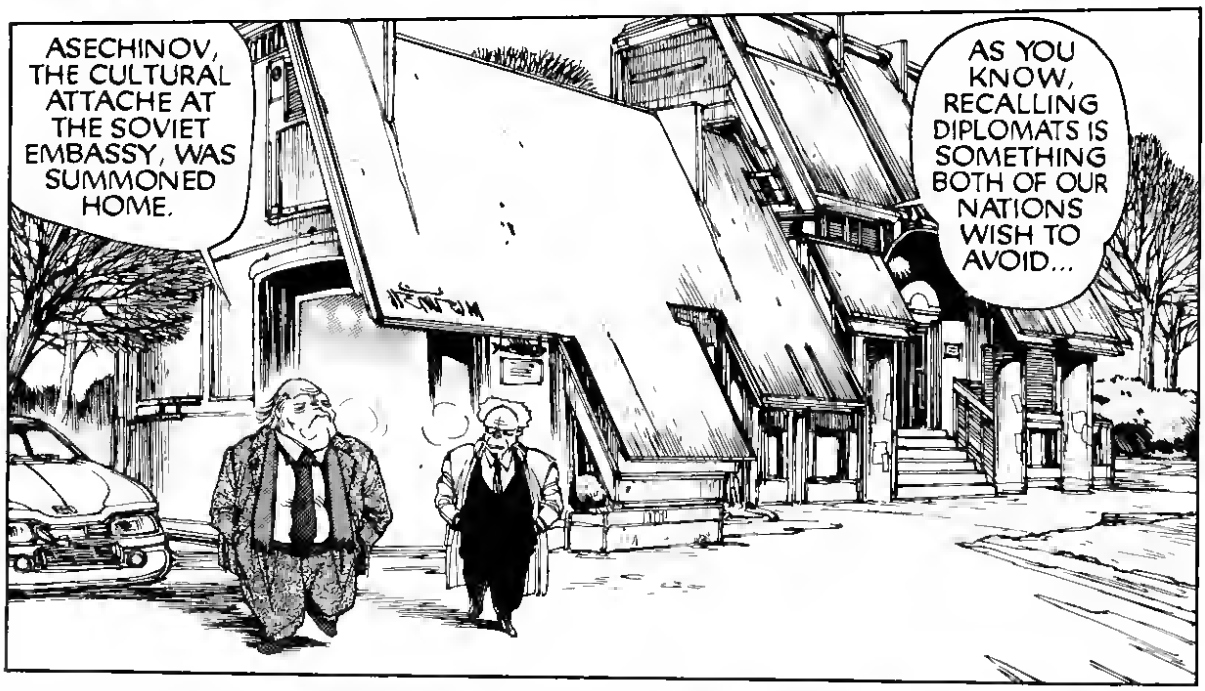
SO YOU'VE BEEN HANGING OUT AND DECORATING THE WALLS, EH?
FOR A MAN, YOU'LL DO *ANYTHING,* WON'T YOU?

DAMN!
*DAMN* YOU, KUSA-NAGI!


LISTEN! I'VE BEEN WORKING FOR THE SAKE OF MY COUNTRY HERE IN THE FAR NORTH FOR *TWENTY YEARS!*
AND FOR *WHAT?* CRAP PAY AND NO PROMO-TION!

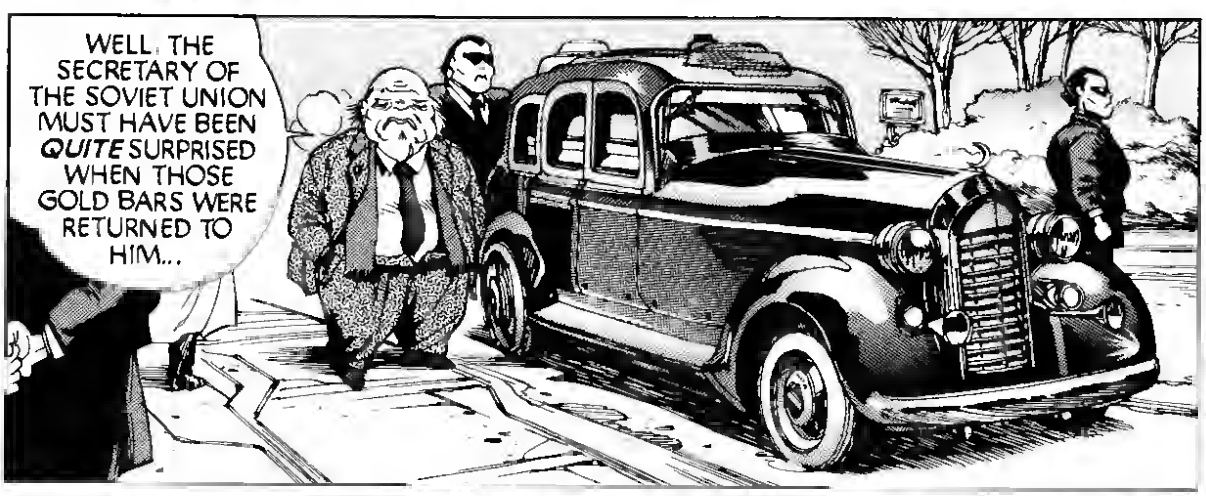
HEY, LIFE'S A BITCH.

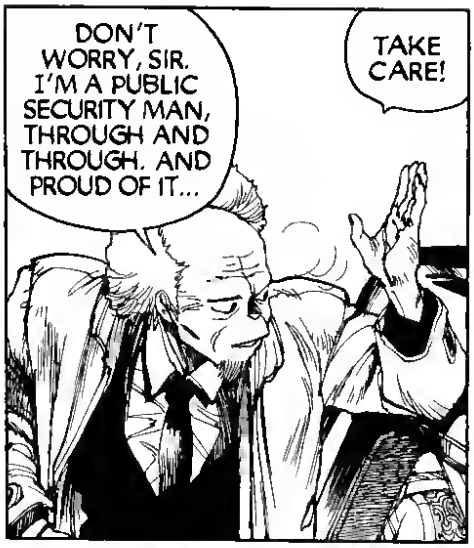

WE RECEIVED A NOTICE FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ABOUT THAT INCIDENT THE OTHER DAY, ARAMAKI.


ASECHINOV, THE CULTURAL ATTACHE AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY, WAS SUMMONED HOME.
AS YOU KNOW, RECALLING DIPLOMATS IS SOMETHING BOTH OF OUR NATIONS WISH TO AVOID...

SO TELL ME, WHY WERE YOU FOLKS OPERATING IN THE FAR NORTH, ANYWAY...?

BECAUSE OF THE SINKING GEOFRONT, SIR. WHILE WE WERE MOUNTING A RESCUE MISSION, WE ACCIDENTALLY CAME ACROSS THE GOLD INGOTS...
DID YOU, INDEED...


WELL, THE SECRETARY OF THE SOVIET UNION MUST HAVE BEEN *QUITE* SURPRISED WHEN THOSE GOLD BARS WERE RETURNED TO HIM...



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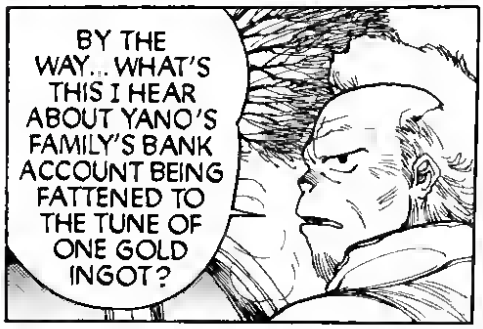
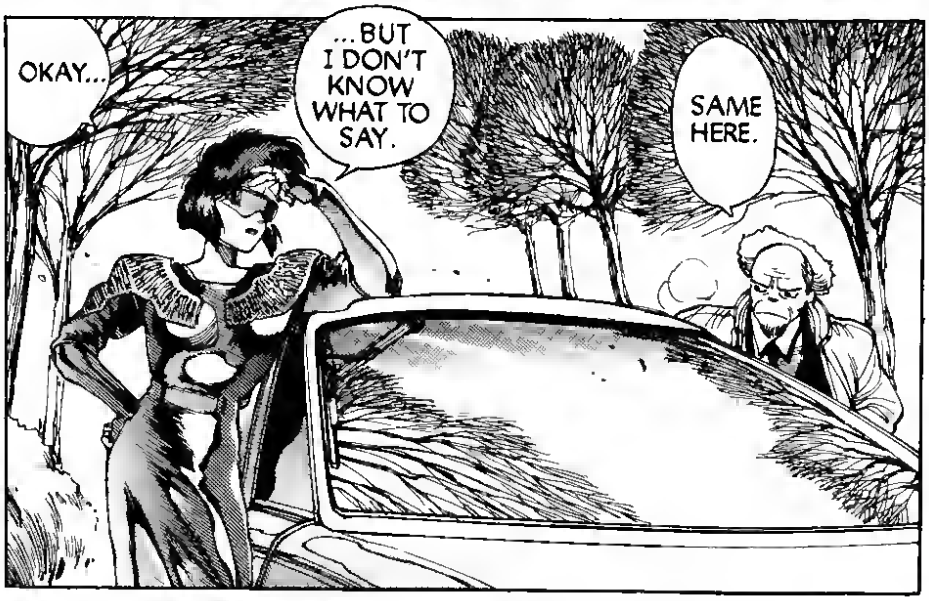
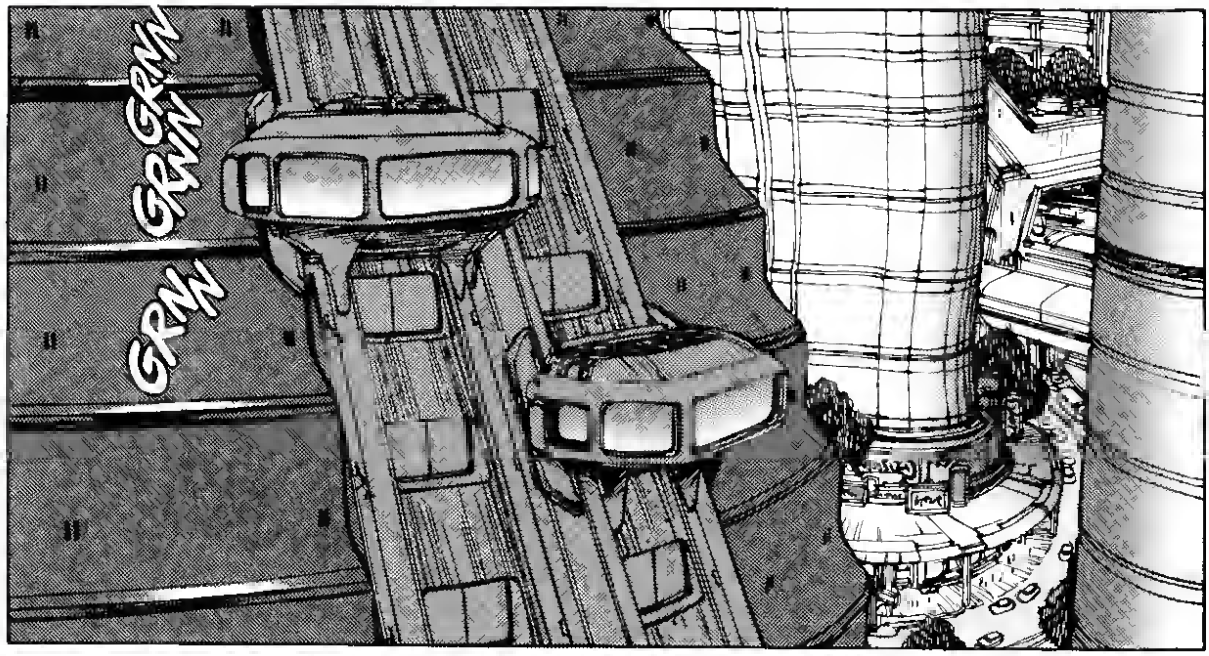
I GUESS THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE DIDN'T WANT MARLOV TO GET HOLD OF THAT MONEY AND WIN IN THE NEXT ELECTION, HMM?
THEY MUST HAVE SENSED WHAT HE WAS UP TO, AND THEN SET US UP TO DO THE DIRTY WORK FOR THEM... TAKE CARE OF THEIR LITTLE PROBLEM.


BY THE WAY... WHAT'S THIS I HEAR ABOUT YANO'S FAMILY'S BANK ACCOUNT BEING FATTENED TO THE TUNE OF ONE GOLD INGOT?

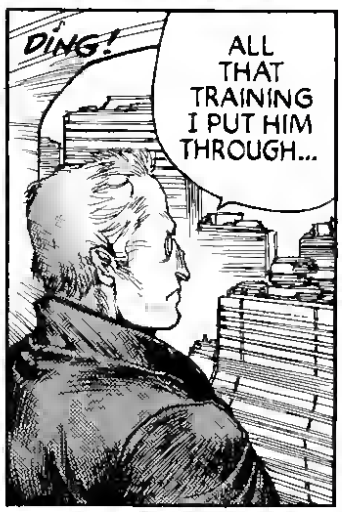
WELL... UH... THINK OF IT AS A POSTHUMOUS APOLOGY FROM KOIL...
WELL, IN THAT CASE, OKAY.
JUST DON'T PUT IT IN YOUR REPORT.

IT'S BEEN TWENTY MINUTES SINCE BATOU WENT TO MEET YANO'S FAMILY. GO GET HIM...


OKAY...
...BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
SAME HERE.

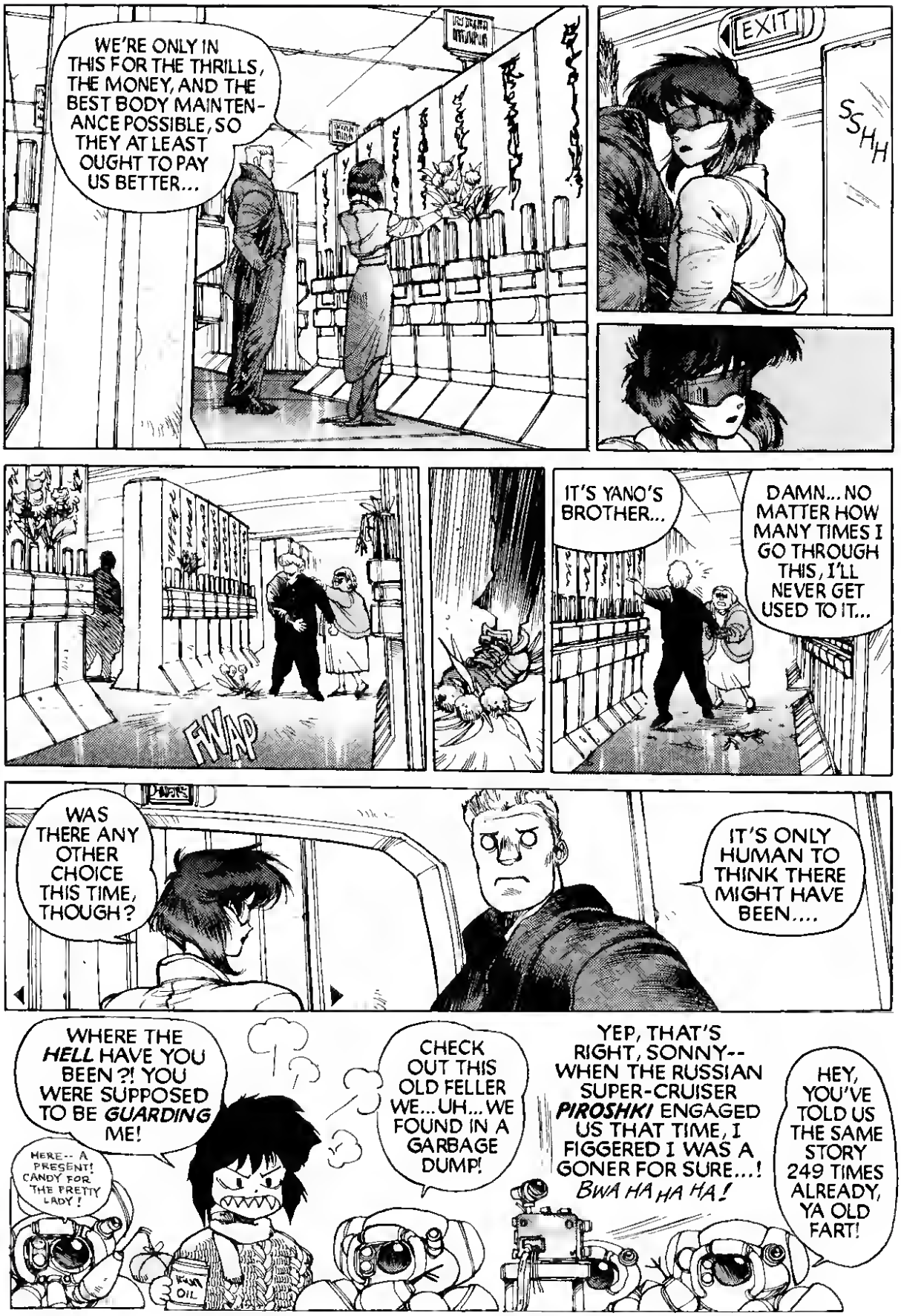

GRNN
GRNN
GRNN

VMMMMMM


DING!
ALL THAT TRAINING I PUT HIM THROUGH...

KSSHHHH

WELL, AT LEAST WE CAN COME VISIT HIM. WHEN I GO, THE LAB'LL COME TO COLLECT MY REMAINS, USE THEM IN EXPERIMENTS, OR RECYCLE THEM...


WE'RE ONLY IN THIS FOR THE THRILLS, THE MONEY, AND THE BEST BODY MAINTENANCE POSSIBLE, SO THEY AT LEAST OUGHT TO PAY US BETTER...
EXIT
SSHH
FWAP
IT'S YANO'S BROTHER...
DAMN... NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I GO THROUGH THIS, I'LL NEVER GET USED TO IT...
WAS THERE ANY OTHER CHOICE THIS TIME, THOUGH?
IT'S ONLY HUMAN TO THINK THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN....
WHERE THE *HELL* HAVE YOU BEEN?! YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE *GUARDING* ME!
HERE-- A PRESENT! CANDY FOR THE PRETTY LADY!
CHECK OUT THIS OLD FELLER WE... UH... WE FOUND IN A GARBAGE DUMP!
YEP, THAT'S RIGHT, SONNY-- WHEN THE RUSSIAN SUPER-CRUISER *PIROSHKI* ENGAGED US THAT TIME, I FIGGERED I WAS A GONER FOR SURE...! *BWA HA HA HA!*
HEY, YOU'VE TOLD US THE SAME STORY 249 TIMES ALREADY, YA OLD FART!
OIL

08
DUMB
BARTER
2. 5. 2030

OKAY, MR. SOMA... WE'RE INJECTING SEVERAL CLUSTERS OF MICRO-MACHINE B PARTS INTO THE LATERAL AND POSTERIOR ASPECTS OF YOUR BRAIN...

FEEL ANY PAIN AROUND THE BRAIN, HON?

NOTE: THE BRAIN ITSELF CANNOT FEEL PAIN.

WHY'D YA THINK I ASKED FOR SOME GODDAMN PAIN-KILLERS?!

IMPELLED BY VAN DER WAALS FORCES, SEVENTY PERCENT OF THE B PARTS WILL UNDERGO REVERSIBLE ADSORPTION AT THE SITE WHERE WE INJECTED THE A PARTS EARLIER. WITHIN MICROSECONDS, THEY WILL SYNTHESIZE POLYMERS, UNDERGO IONIC BONDING, AND ANCHOR THEMSELVES....

IF YOU PAY FOR ALL OF 'EM...

THIS MACHINE INJECTS MICROMACHINES USING THE FORCE OF THEIR ELECTRICAL CHARGES

SO HOW ABOUT A REFUND ON THE OTHER THIRTY PERCENT?!

IF THE PATTERN CONTROL IS TOO TIGHT, THE SYSTEM WON'T WORK OPTIMALLY. IT REQUIRES THAT A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF SLACK BE BUILT IN, SIR!

THIS IS NOT A LIGHT FIXTURE BUT A SPECIAL DEVICE THAT ENSURES THE MICROMACHINES ARE DEPOSITED UNIFORMLY

AREN'T YOU GOING TO REMOVE THE OLD MICRO-MACHINES?

NOT WHEN THEY'RE AS ANCHORED AS THEY ARE IN YOUR CASE. IF WE TRIED TO STRIP THEM OUT, YOU'D LOSE QUITE A FEW BRAIN CELLS.

NEXT WE USE A MAGNETIC YOKE TO ADJUST THE MATRIX SETTINGS SO THAT THE MICROMACHINES AT EACH COORDINATE PROPERLY NETWORK WITH THE SERVER GRAFTED TO YOUR OCCIPITAL...

VMMMM

IT TAKES TIME, SINCE THE NUMBER OF SCAN LINES INCREASES RELATIVE TO THE SIZE OF THE MICROMACHINES.

THIS WAY, MICROMACHINES THAT HAVE PERMEATED THE BRAIN CAN BOTH SEND AND RECEIVE SIGNALS ON THE BRAIN CONDITION AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRICAL SIGNALS... SENSATIONS ARE SHARED WITH THE SENSORY NERVES...

B

B

B

B?

...THOUGHTS AND MEMORIES ARE SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT TO TRANSMIT DUE TO INDIVIDUAL VARIATIONS IN SIGNAL DISTRIBUTION AND SPECIFIC IMAGING. AS A RESULT, THE SYSTEM IS SET TO USE BOTH LANGUAGE AND VISUAL PERCEPTION LINGUISTIC FIELDS ARE USED FOR THE ON/OFF FUNCTION IN BOTH CYBERBRAINS.

WE OCCLUDE PART OF THE CAROTID ARTERY WITH ABSORPTIVE STAPLES... AND BY THE TIME THEY DISAPPEAR THROUGH HEMOLYSIS...

... BOTH NEURO AND MACHINE PRESSURES HAVE RETURNED TO NORMAL VALUES, FEEDING BACK A NICE TIGHT FEELING. AND OF COURSE, THE PAIN-KILLER IMPLANT HAS DISSOLVED, TOO...

heh heh heh heh

THIS IS *VERY* DANGEROUS.

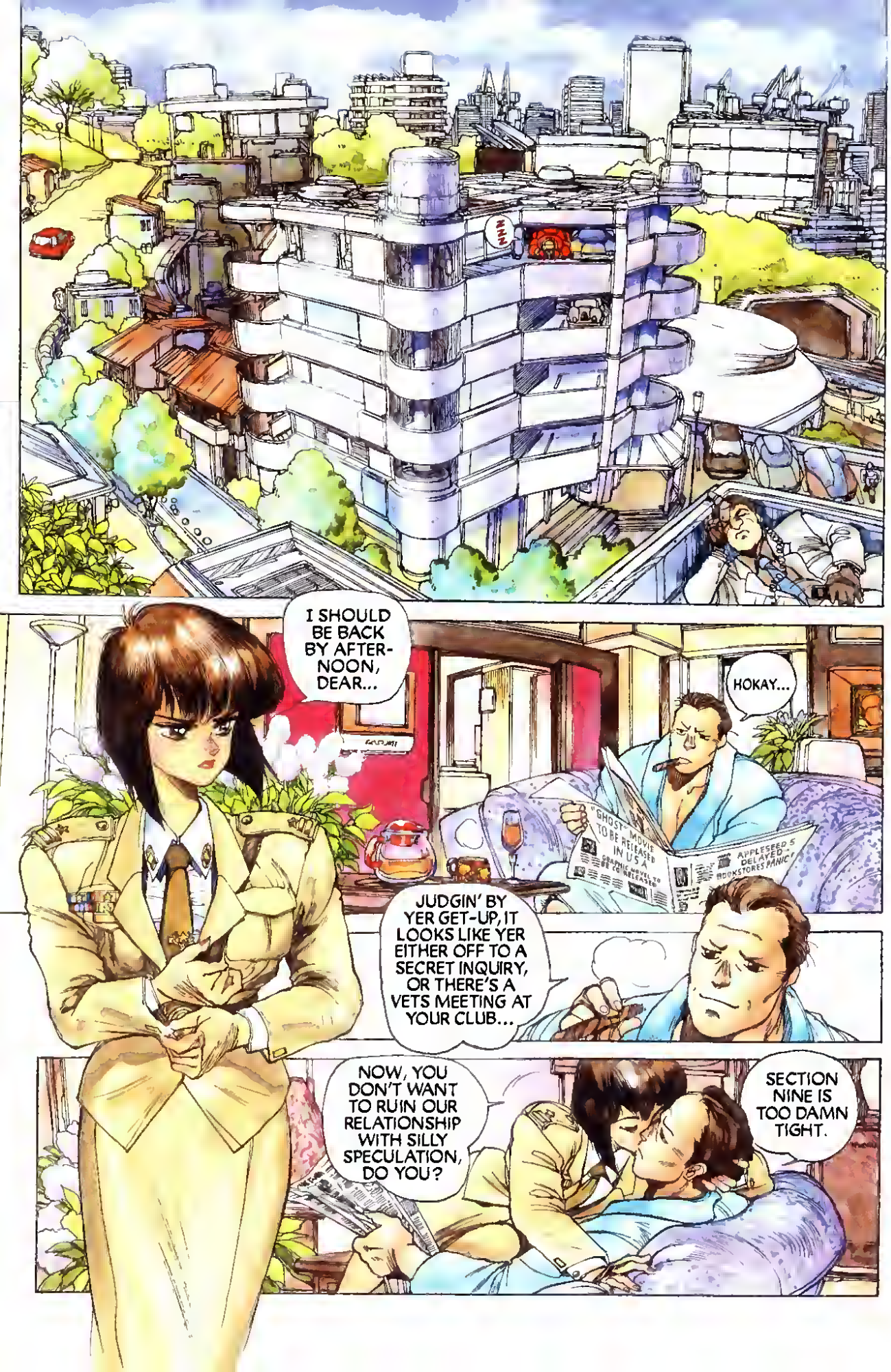
THEN, AT THE END, WE RUN A COMPARE TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE SYNCHED WITH THE IMAGE OF THE ORIGINAL MODEL. THIS ST--

FILE IT, DOC...

SINCE BRAIN WAVES CAN BE USED LIKE FINGERPRINTS TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN PEOPLE, THEY'RE AMPLIFIED AND USED AS A "KEY."

...I'M ALREADY SYNCHIN' FINE WITH WHAT I WANTED TO NET WITH.

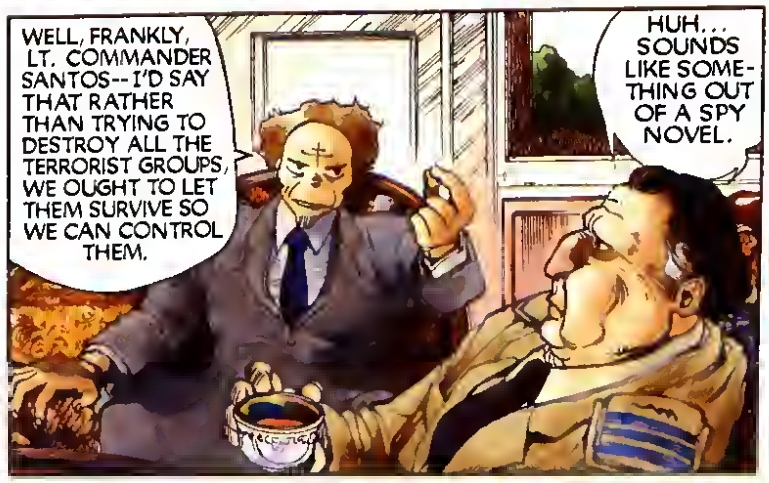
?


I SHOULD BE BACK BY AFTER-NOON, DEAR...
HOKAY...
"GHOST" MOVIE TO BE RELEASED IN U.S.A.
APPLESEED 5 DELAYED - BOOKSTORES PANIC!
JUDGIN' BY YER GET-UP, IT LOOKS LIKE YER EITHER OFF TO A SECRET INQUIRY, OR THERE'S A VETS MEETING AT YOUR CLUB...
NOW, YOU DON'T WANT TO RUIN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH SILLY SPECULATION, DO YOU?
SECTION NINE IS TOO DAMN TIGHT.

"LOOSE" IN THE SENSE OF LEAKS

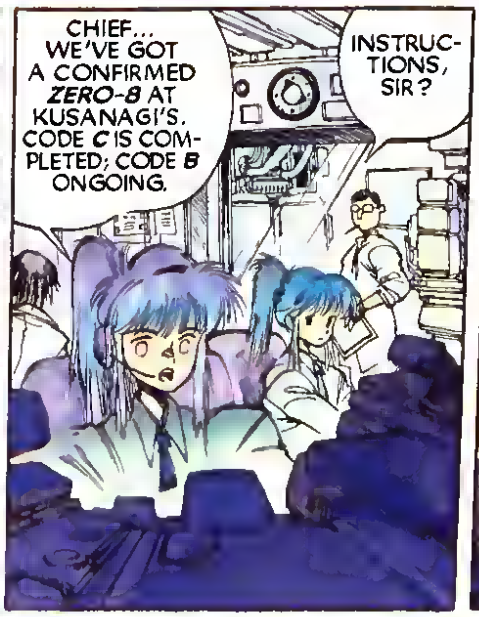
BAM BAM BAM
CLIK
WHINK
beep
beep
C4
0003
NAILS 20mm
KROOM

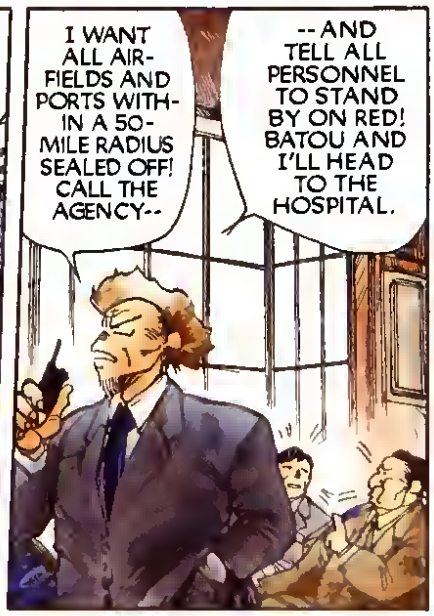
NO MATTER HOW MANY TERRORISTS WE RETIRE, NEW ONES KEEP POPPING UP...
ANY WAY TO GET A HANDLE ON THIS PROBLEM?


WELL, FRANKLY, LT. COMMANDER SANTOS--I'D SAY THAT RATHER THAN TRYING TO DESTROY ALL THE TERRORIST GROUPS, WE OUGHT TO LET THEM SURVIVE SO WE CAN CONTROL THEM.
HUH... SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A SPY NOVEL.

YOU'D BE PARTIALLY RECOGNIZING THEIR POWER.
THERE ARE TIGHT LINKS BETWEEN THE MILITARY, DRUG DEALERS, TERRORISTS, THE UNDERWORLD, AND CORRUPT POLICE IN MY COUNTRY... AND A LOT OF PEOPLE GET OUT OF CONTROL.

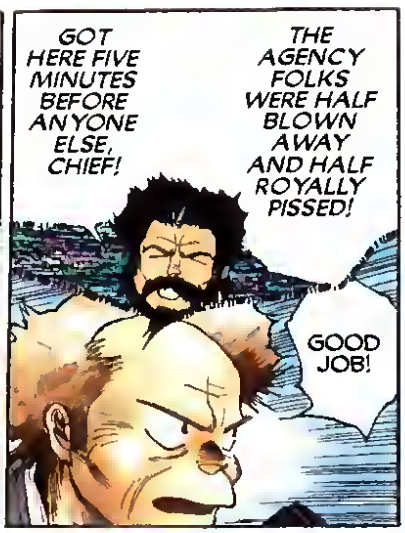
IT'S RESULTS WE'RE INTERESTED IN NOT IDEALS
BEEP BEEP BEEP
'SCUSE ME...

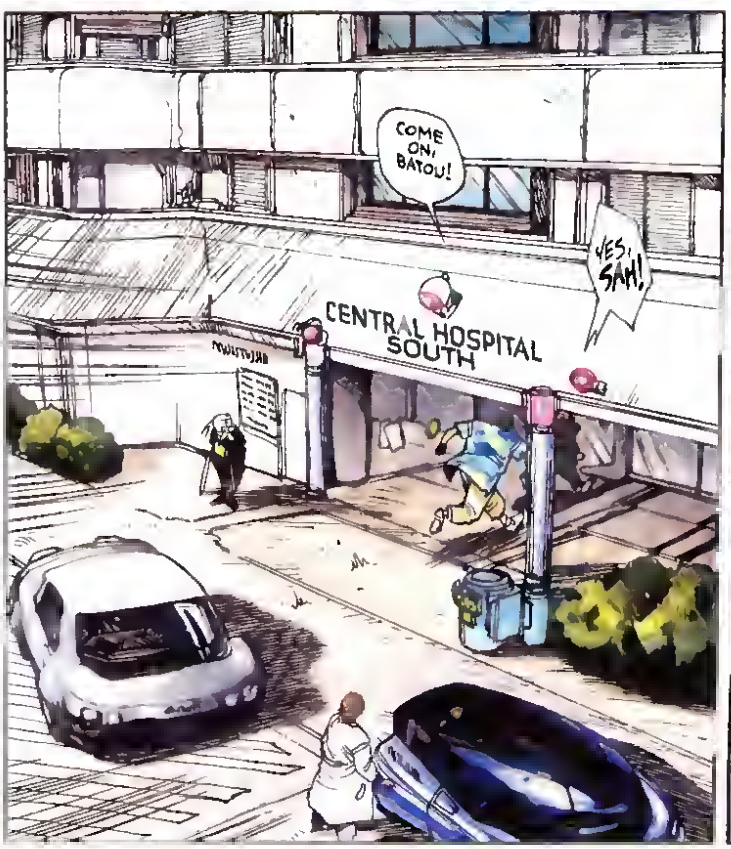

CHIEF... WE'VE GOT A CONFIRMED ZERO-8 AT KUSANAGI'S. CODE C IS COMPLETED; CODE B ONGOING.
INSTRUCTIONS, SIR?

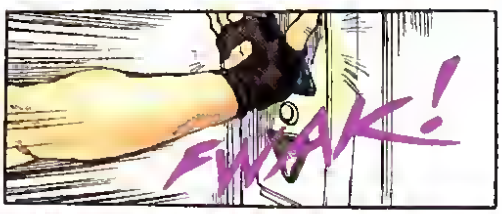

I WANT ALL AIRFIELDS AND PORTS WITHIN A 50-MILE RADIUS SEALED OFF! CALL THE AGENCY--
--AND TELL ALL PERSONNEL TO STAND BY ON RED! BATOU AND I'LL HEAD TO THE HOSPITAL.

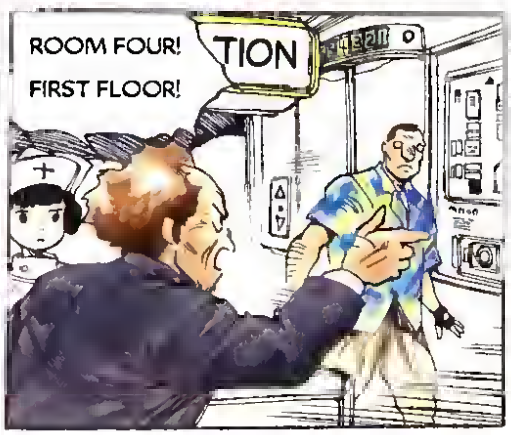
BREAKING
HOW MANY MINUTES?
SKREEK

TWELVE!
WHAM
ISHIKAWA! YOU'VE GOT COMMAND OF THE SITE INVESTIGATION?


GOT HERE FIVE MINUTES BEFORE ANYONE ELSE, CHIEF!
THE AGENCY FOLKS WERE HALF BLOWN AWAY AND HALF ROYALLY PISSED!
GOOD JOB!


COME ON, BATOU!
YES, SAM!
CENTRAL HOSPITAL SOUTH


FWAK!


ROOM FOUR!
FIRST FLOOR!
TION

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CHIEF! I'VE GOT THE INITIAL VIDEO FEED FOR YOU!
HOLD IT FOR 30 SECONDS!

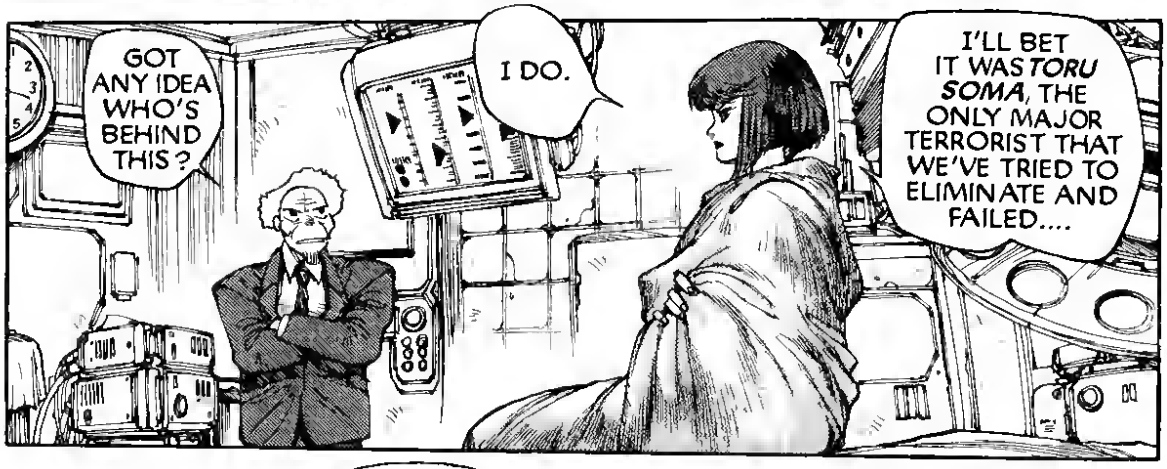
I'LL CALL YOU LATER, DEAR.

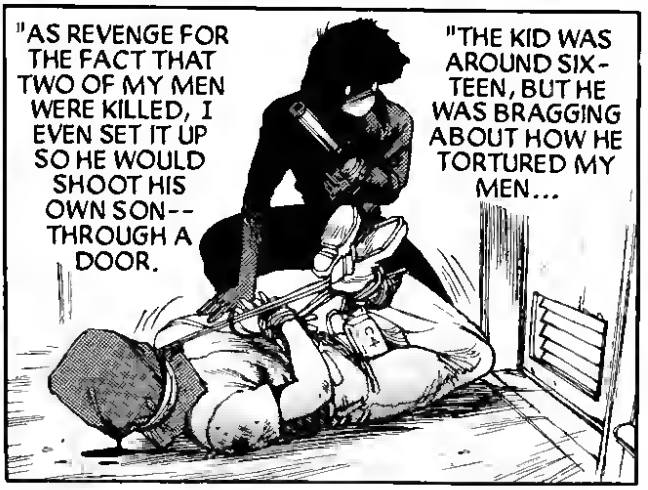
AW, SORRY 'BOUT THIS, PAL...
BATOU! KNOCK IT OFF!

GOLLY GEE, MAJOR! YOU'VE BEEN DATING THAT GUY FOR NEARLY SEVEN MONTHS...
GOTTA BE A NEW RECORD!

HERE'S THE SCOOP, CHIEF! ONE 10-GAUGE SHOT-GUN SHELL FOUND OUTSIDE THE DOOR, AND TEN SEBURO™ M5 SHELL CASINGS INSIDE...
SO THE MAJOR MUST'VE FIRED LIKE THIS, HERE, SEE?

AND ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR THERE'RE BODY FRAGMENTS, SCREWS, AND NAILS... THE SNIFFER SAYS IT WAS C4.
THE MAJOR'S OKAY, RIGHT? LOOKS LIKE THIS BLAST WAS JUST INTENDED AS A WARNING, SO I FIGURE SHE HAD TIME TO TAKE COVER...





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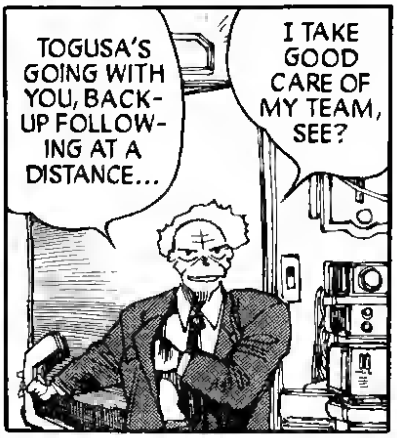

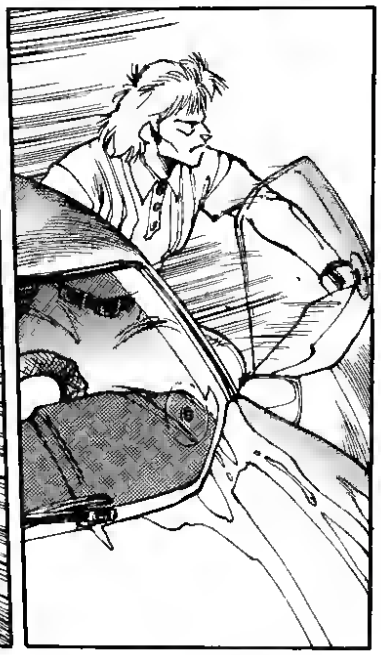

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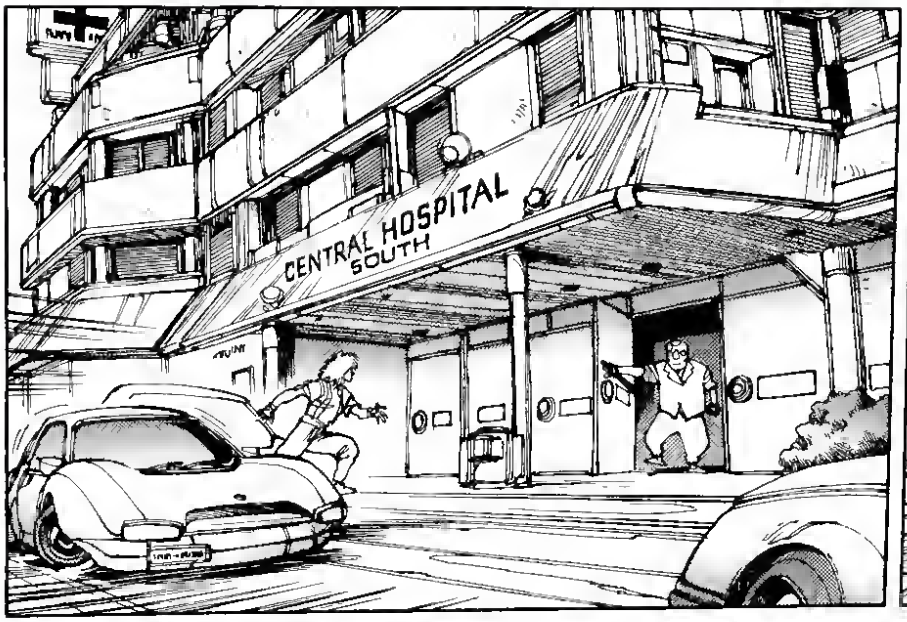
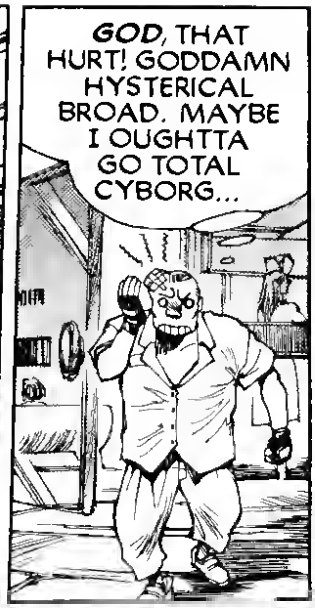
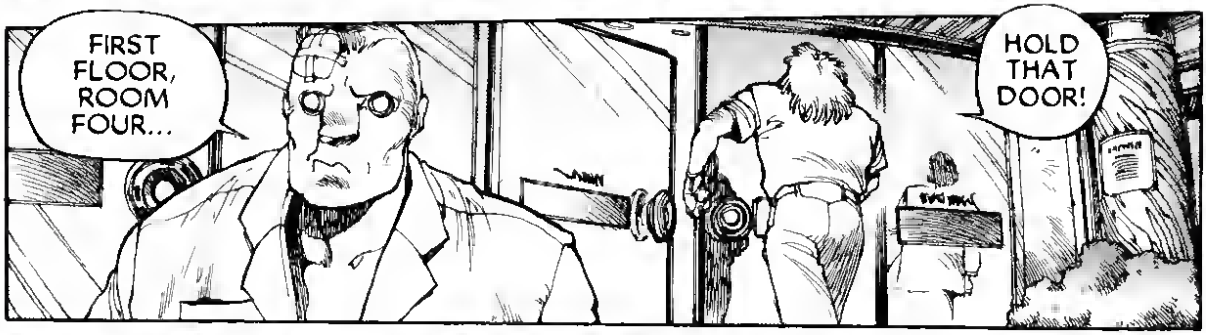
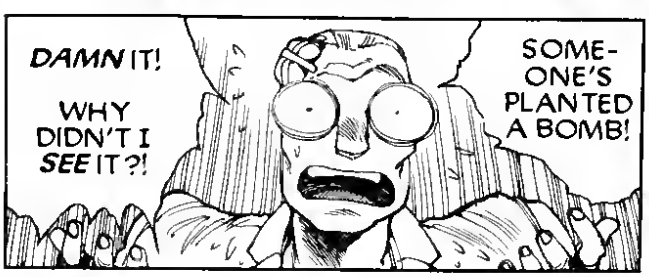
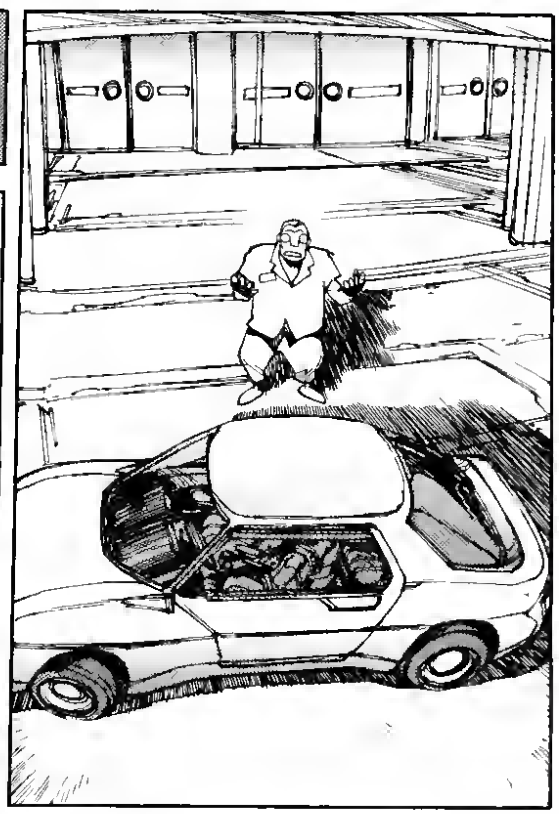

CENTRAL HOSPITAL
SOUTH


*GOD*, THAT HURT! GODDAMN HYSTERICAL BROAD. MAYBE I OUGHTTA GO TOTAL CYBORG...


FIRST FLOOR, ROOM FOUR...
HOLD THAT DOOR!

HEY, BATOU-- I'M PRETTY HANDY SOME-TIMES, YA KNOW. SO IF YOU'RE IN A TIGHT SPOT, JUST GIVE A CALL...


*DAMN* IT!
WHY DIDN'T I *SEE* IT?!
SOME-ONE'S PLANTED A BOMB!



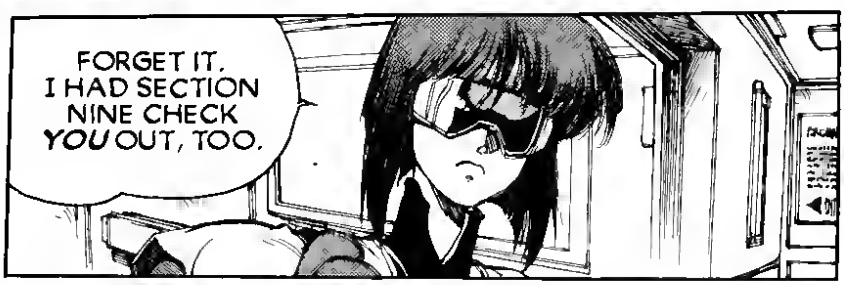
SO WE'RE HUNTING FOR TERRORISTS, EH? AH, HELL, MY WEEK-END'S BEEN SHOT ANY-WAY...

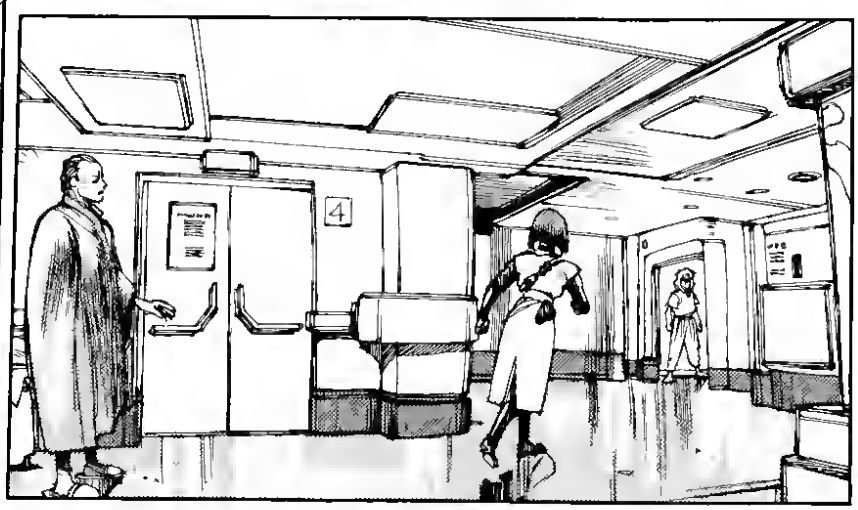
BE THERE IN THIRTY... OVER.
YOU WANNA ANSWER A QUESTION FOR ME?

YOU SHOWED SOME-ONE MY PHOTO, DIDN'T YOU?
...AND THAT *SOMEONE* KNOWS MY NAME AND ADDRESS, TOO... RIGHT?

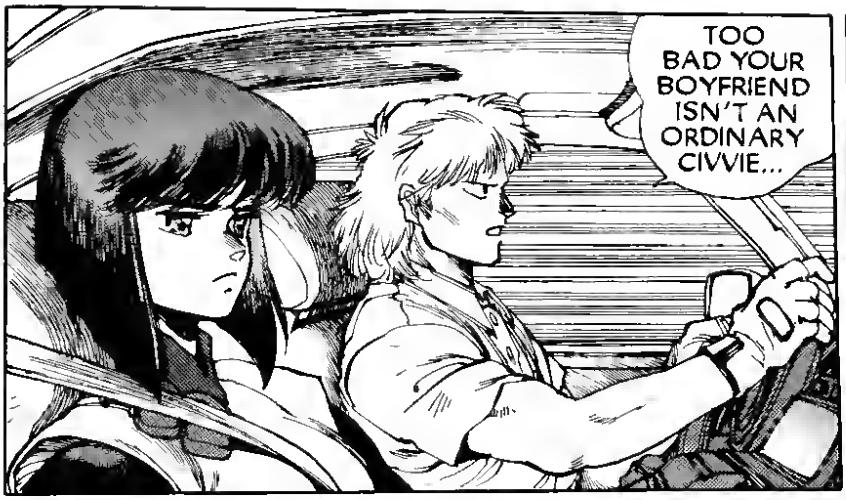
THAT'S A QUESTION I'D RATHER NOT AN-SWER, BUT I DON'T WANT TO LIE, EITHER...
YOU HAD *S-1* CHECK ME OUT, DIDN'T YOU...?

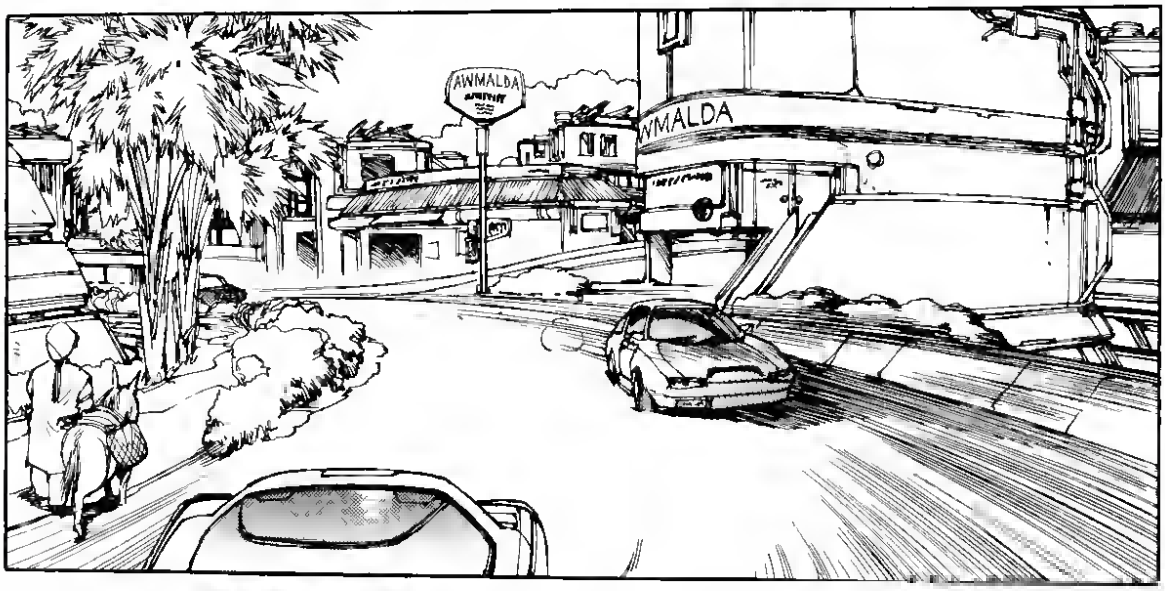
HEY, IT'S A HABIT I DEVELOPED EVER SINCE I FOUND OUT THE WIFE OF ONE OF MY MEN HAD BEEN FEEDING INFOR-MATION TO TERRORISTS FOR FOUR YEARS. LOOK, ONLY THE CHIEF OF SECTION ONE AND TWO OF MY MEN KNOW ABOUT YOU...

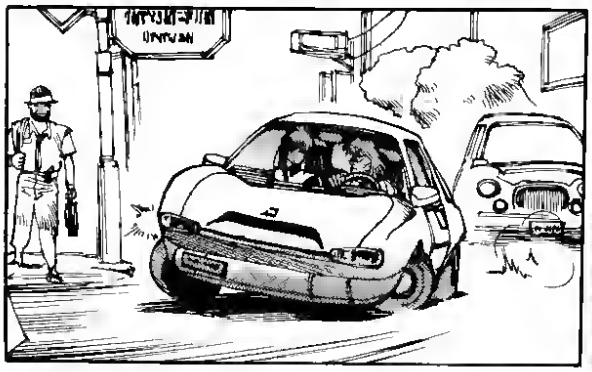

FORGET IT. I HAD SECTION NINE CHECK *YOU* OUT, TOO.

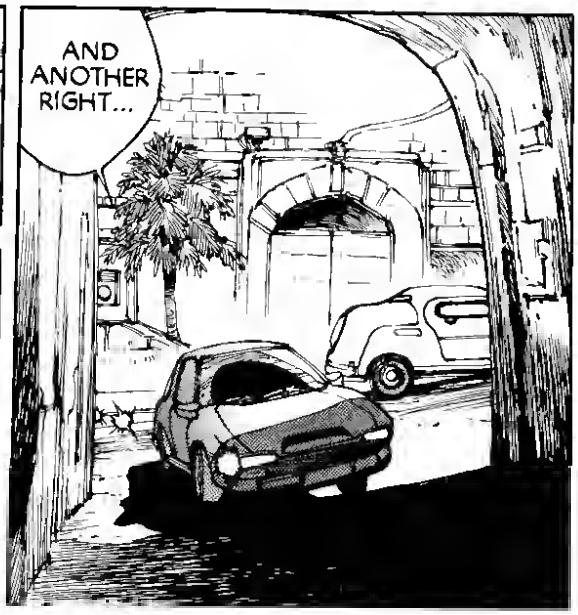

4

WHY DON'T YOU CALL CITIZENS' GUIDANCE... OR THE BOMB-DISPOSAL SQUAD...?
YOU GOTTA BE JOKIN'... I'D BE LABELED AN IDIOT FOR GENERATIONS.
NO KIDDING, HUH?
WEEOO
WEEOO
!
BRMMM
beep
b-beep!!
HEY, LAME BRAIN!!!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?! GET OUTTA THE FRIGGIN' WAY!
DON'T GIMME THAT SHIT! IT'S AN EMERGENCY!
MOVE IT!!
SCREW YOU!
SAY, MAJOR...







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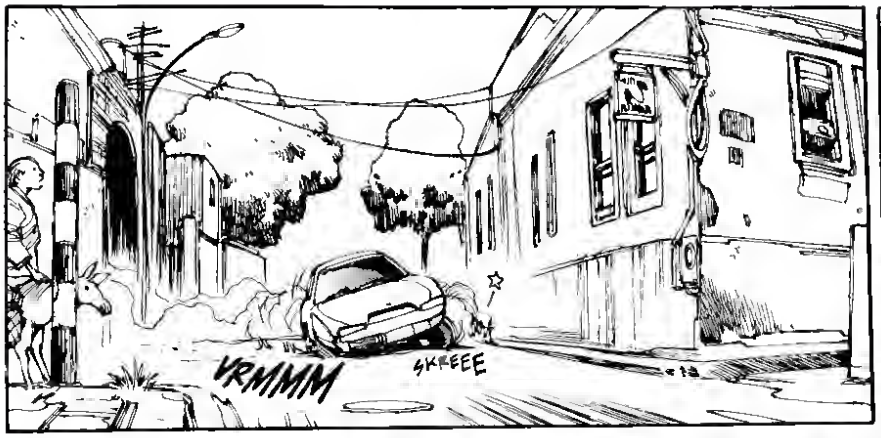
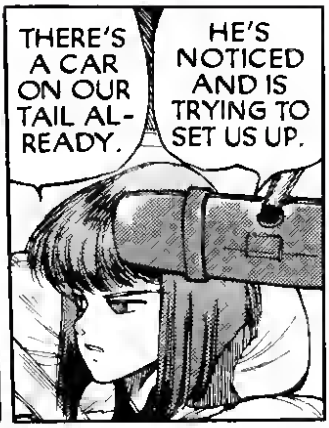
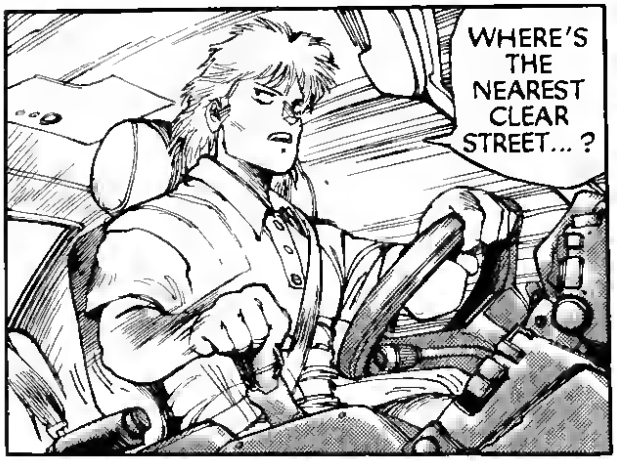
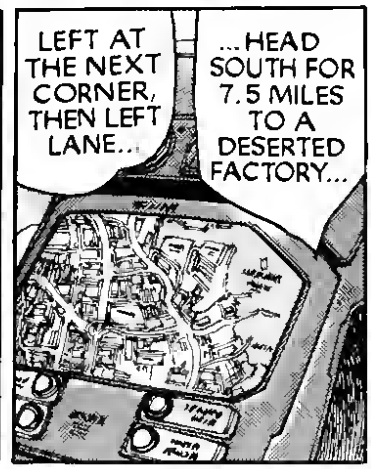
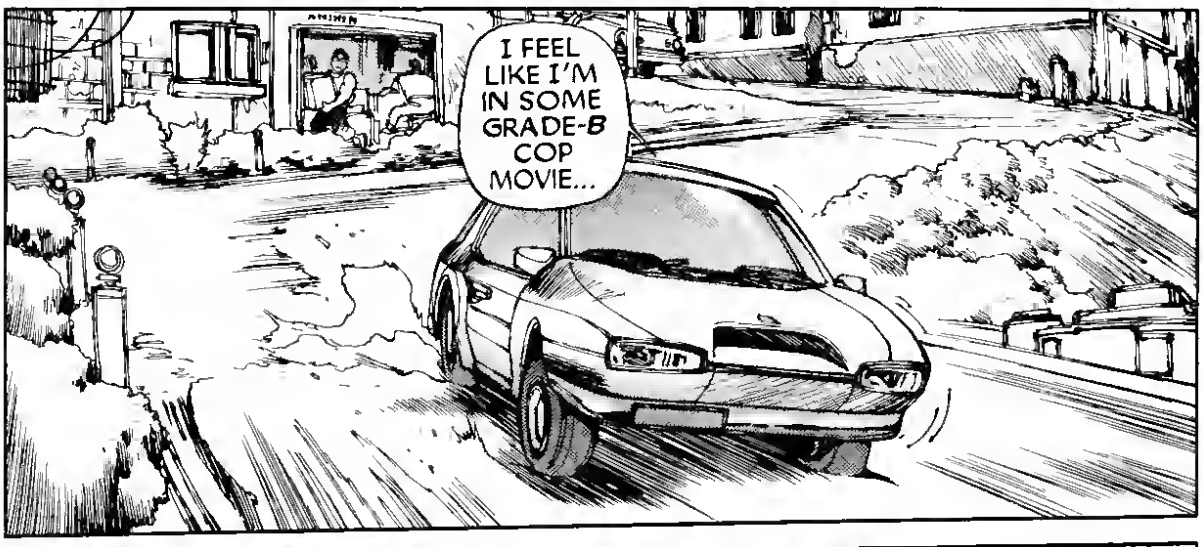

VRMMM
SKREEE

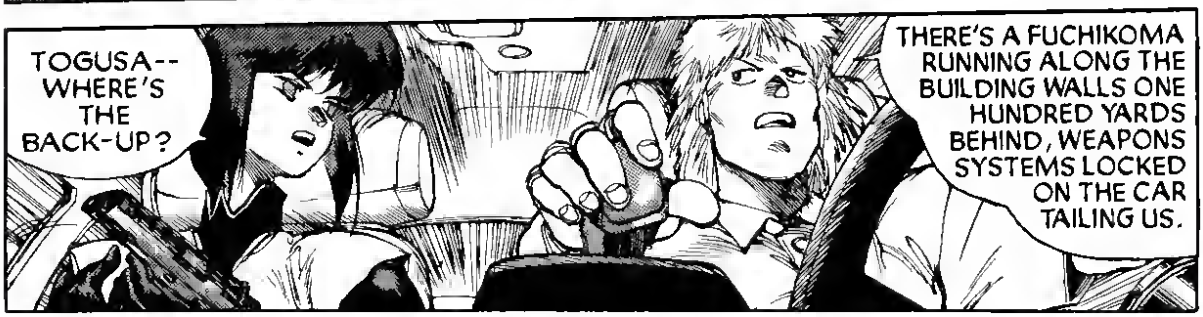

THERE'S A CAR ON OUR TAIL AL-READY.
HE'S NOTICED AND IS TRYING TO SET US UP.

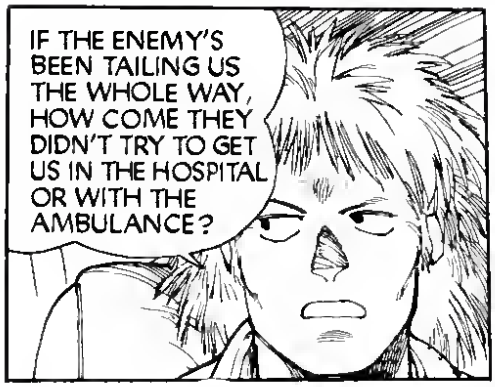

WHERE'S THE NEAREST CLEAR STREET... ?

VREEE
RRRRR

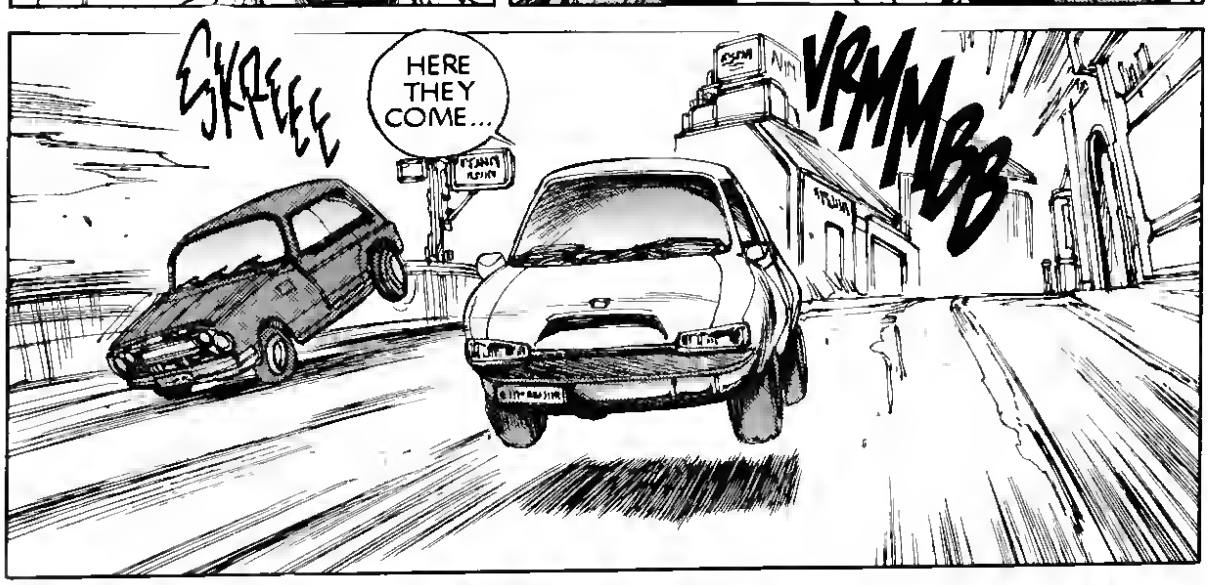

LEFT AT THE NEXT CORNER, THEN LEFT LANE...
...HEAD SOUTH FOR 7.5 MILES TO A DESERTED FACTORY...


I FEEL LIKE I'M IN SOME GRADE-B COP MOVIE...

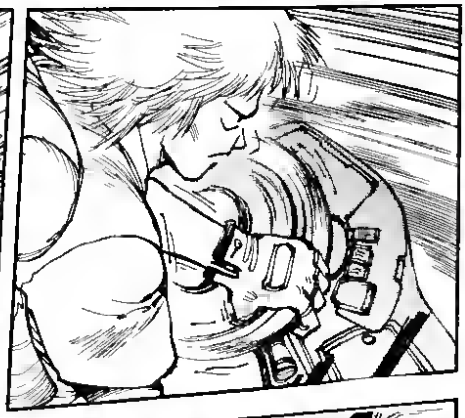

TOGUSA-- WHERE'S THE BACK-UP?
THERE'S A FUCHIKOMA RUNNING ALONG THE BUILDING WALLS ONE HUNDRED YARDS BEHIND, WEAPONS SYSTEMS LOCKED ON THE CAR TAILING US.

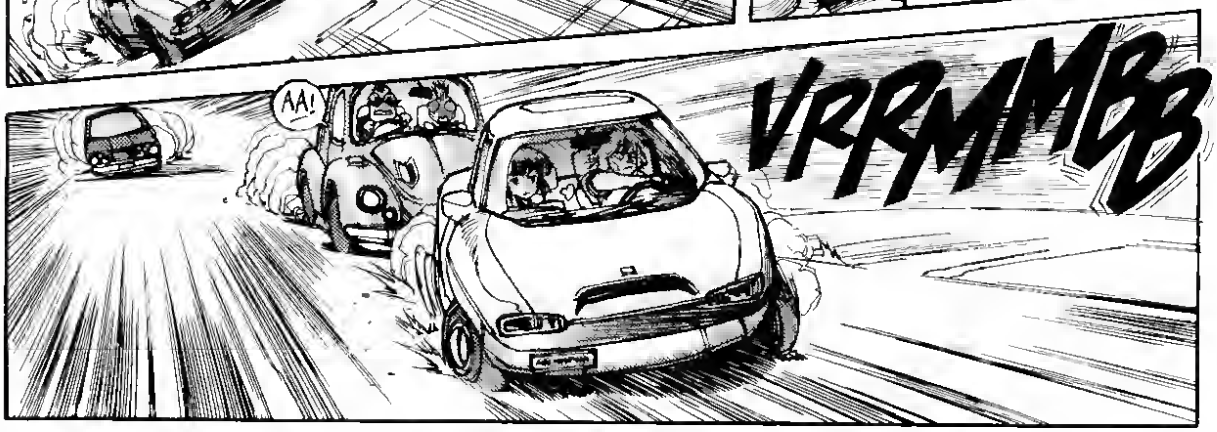

IF THE ENEMY'S BEEN TAILING US THE WHOLE WAY, HOW COME THEY DIDN'T TRY TO GET US IN THE HOSPITAL OR WITH THE AMBULANCE?

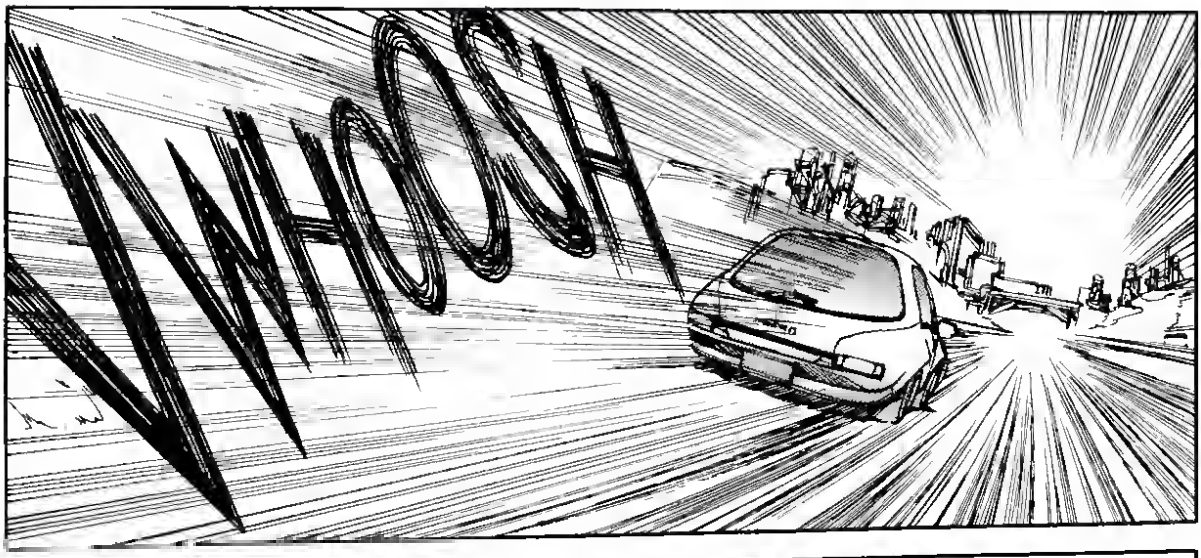
EITHER THEY DON'T HAVE LONG-RANGE WEAPONS, OR THEY JUST WANT TO BETTER SAVOR THE THRILL OF THE KILL...
AT ANY RATE, WE'LL GET MORE INFORMATION FROM OUR GUYS IN THE REAR WHEN WE REACH THE FACTORY.

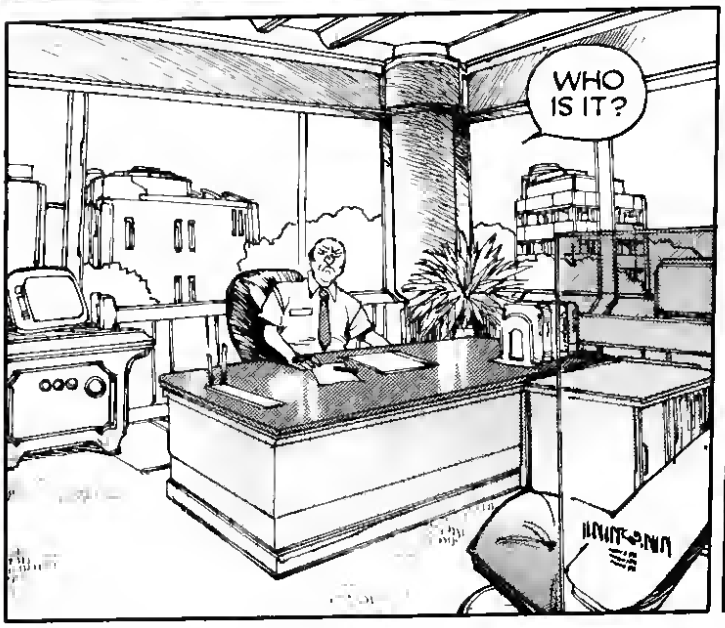

SKREEE
HERE THEY COME...
VRMMBB

SKREEE




AA!
VRRMMBB

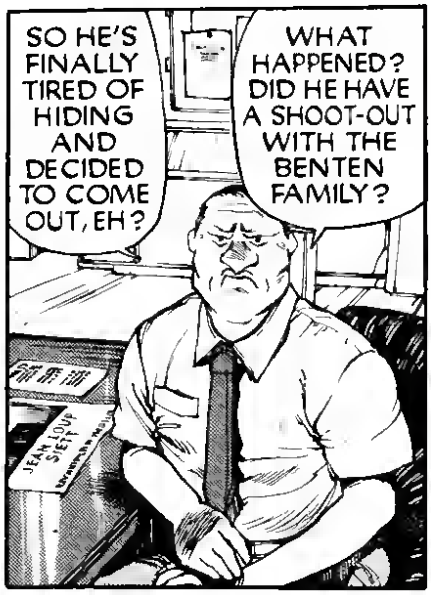

WHOOSH


WHO IS IT?

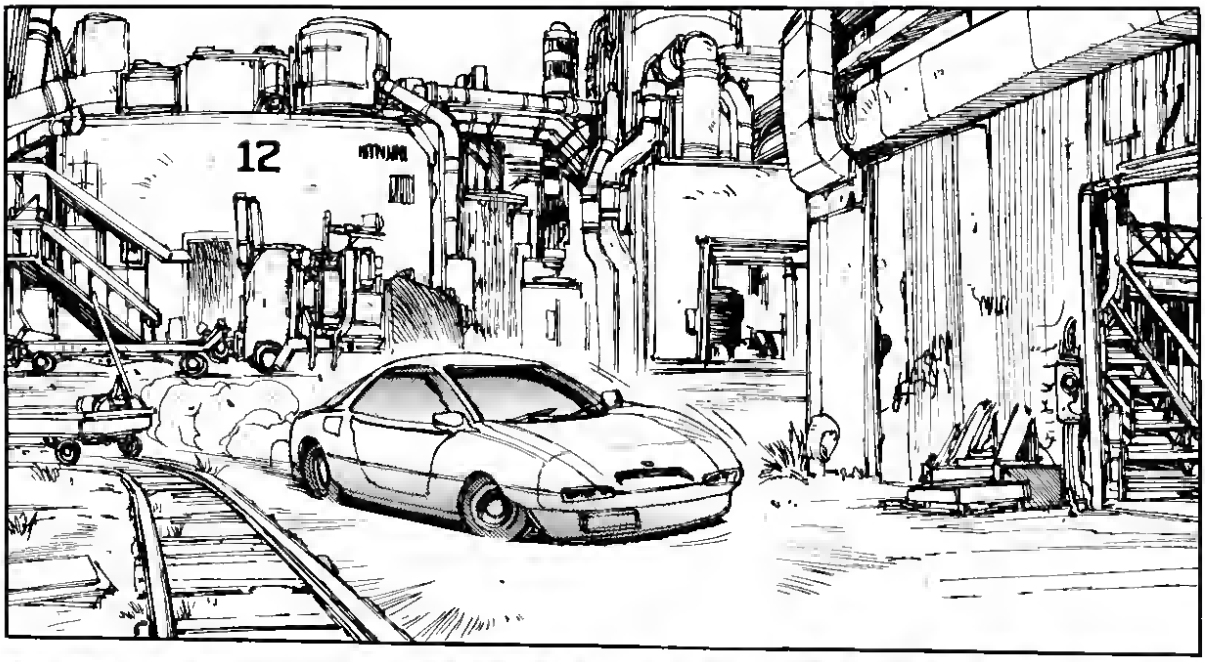
HEY--?!

RELAX. OPTO-CAM EQUALS COPS, RIGHT? I'M FROM PUBLIC SECURITY, SECTION NINE, JUST AS ARRANGED.
TIK-K

CAN'T BE SURE THESE DAYS. THERE ARE AN AWFUL LOT OF COPS AND SDF PEOPLE IN CAHOOTS WITH THE ORGANIZATION. SO, ANYWAY... WHAT DO YOU WANT?
TORU SOMA.
VMMM


SO HE'S FINALLY TIRED OF HIDING AND DECIDED TO COME OUT, EH?
WHAT HAPPENED? DID HE HAVE A SHOOT-OUT WITH THE BENTEN FAMILY?

I CAME HERE BECAUSE I HEARD YOU CONTROL THE GROUP'S BACK-UP.
SOMA'S A DIFFERENT CASE... HE'S A LONE-WOLF/TYCOON TYPE. HE WANTED TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE BENTEN FAMILY AND AVOID GOING THROUGH OUR GROUP.
HE HAD DRUGS, WEAPONS, PEOPLE, YOU NAME IT, BUT BENTEN WOULDN'T DEAL WITH HIM.
HIS CONNECTIONS TO OUR GROUP ARE BROAD-BASED AND, SO FAR, STABLE.
I SUSPECT HE HAD TO GO UNDERGROUND BECAUSE BENTEN DOESN'T THINK MUCH OF HIM.
THAT'S ALL I KNOW.
HERE'S THE MOST RECENT FACE OF HIS THAT WE KNOW ABOUT.
PROBABLY HASN'T CHANGED MUCH.
FAP
I ENVY DESK JOCKEYS LIKE YOU.
"DISK JOCKEYS"?
VM MM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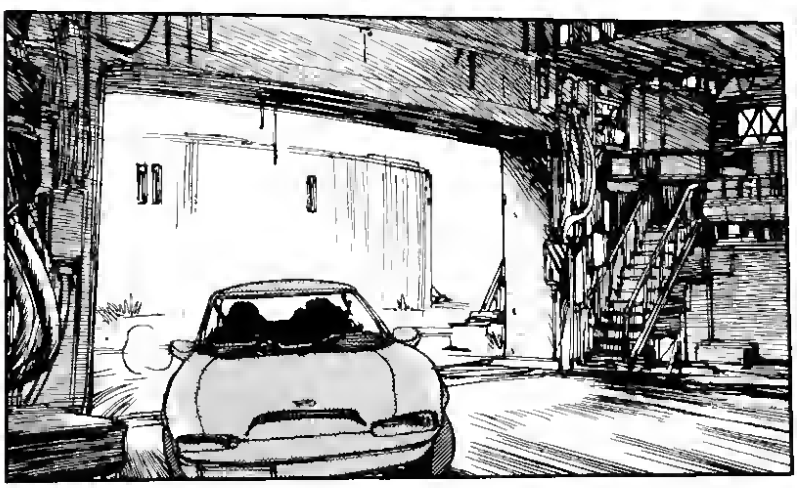
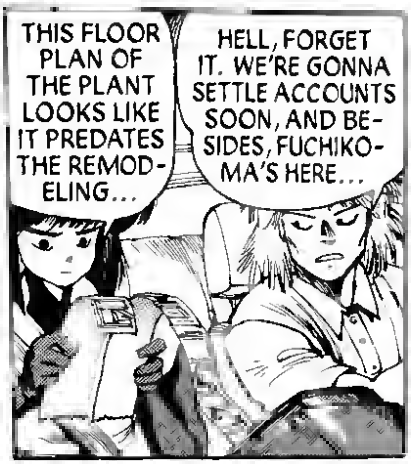
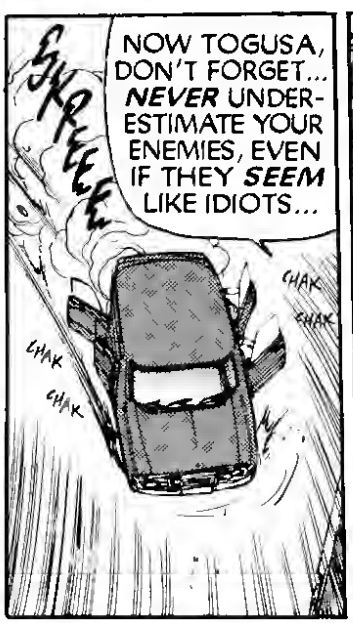
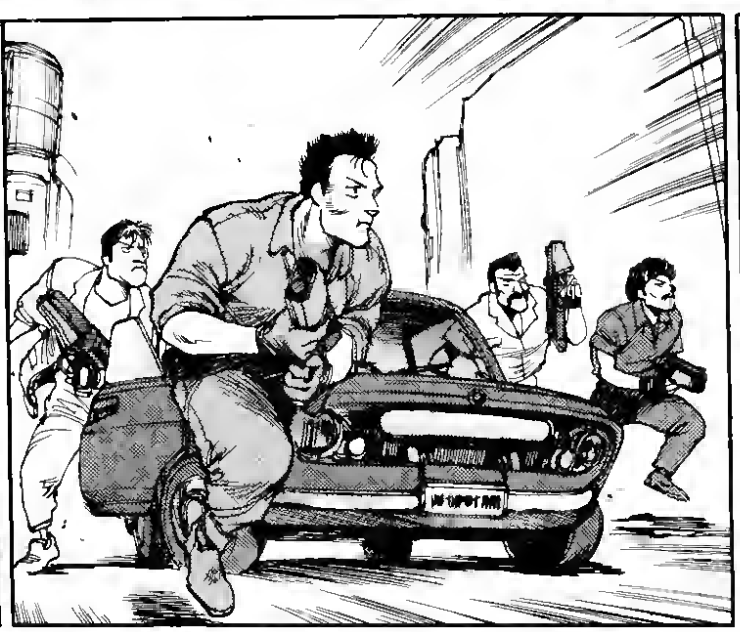



THIS FLOOR PLAN OF THE PLANT LOOKS LIKE IT PREDATES THE REMODELING...
HELL, FORGET IT. WE'RE GONNA SETTLE ACCOUNTS SOON, AND BESIDES, FUCHIKOMA'S HERE...

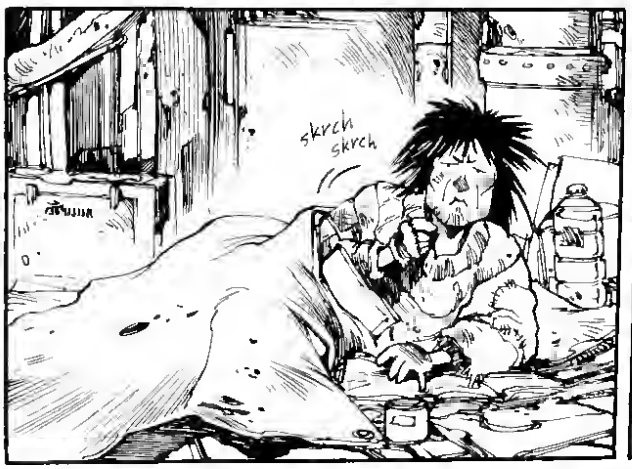

SKREEEE
NOW TOGUSA, DON'T FORGET... *NEVER* UNDERESTIMATE YOUR ENEMIES, EVEN IF THEY *SEEM* LIKE IDIOTS...
CHAK CHAK
CHAK CHAK



WELL, WELL, WELL...

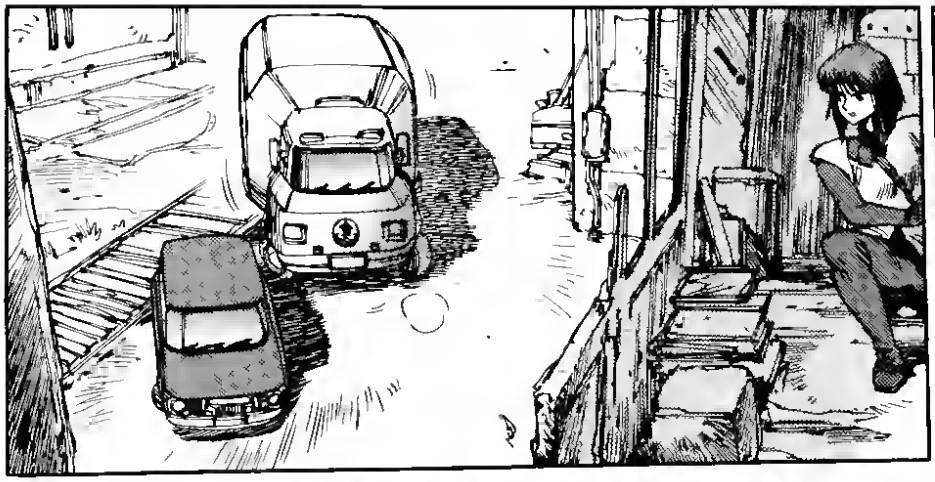
NO IDIOTS, THESE GUYS... THEY'VE HAD SOME ADVANCED TRAINING. LITTLE WEAK ON TACTICS, THOUGH.
ACK...
UMPH

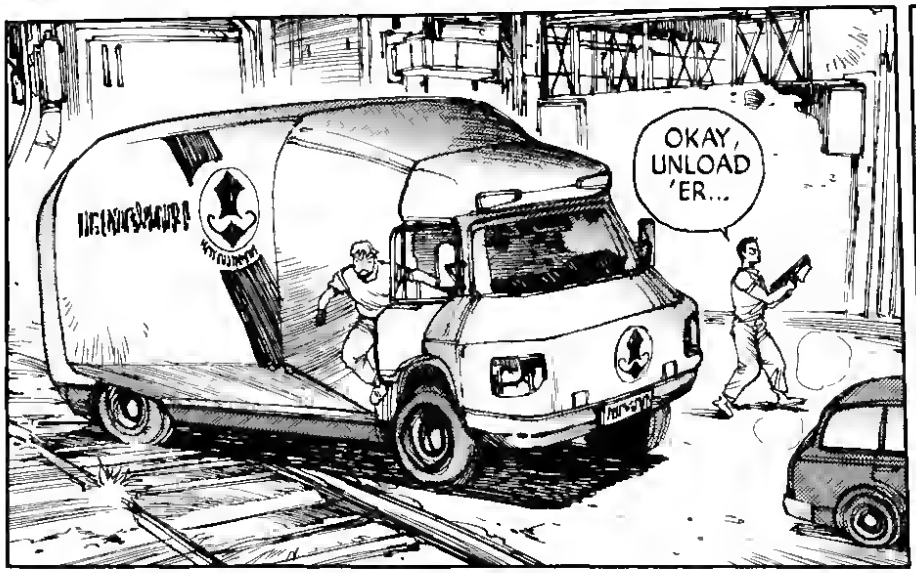
WHIP


skrch skrch

JEEZ, BUDDY, DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT!
LOOK, JUST STAY PUT, OKAY?
HUH?
?

HEY, WHAT TH' FUG?
Reggae
WAZZUP?
YOU GUYS BETTER NOT TRY T' KICK US OUT...



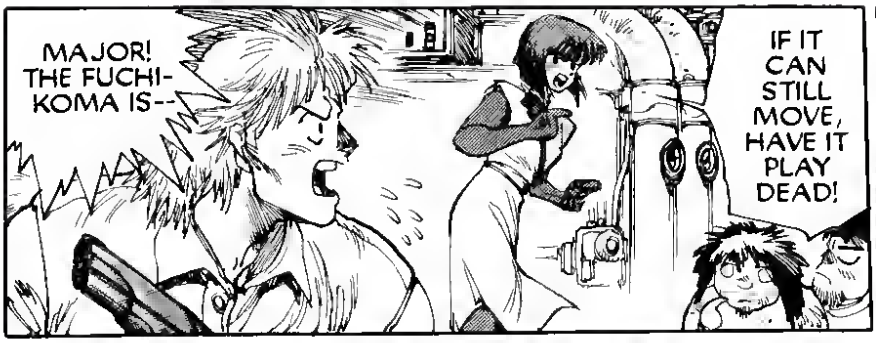

OKAY, UNLOAD 'ER...

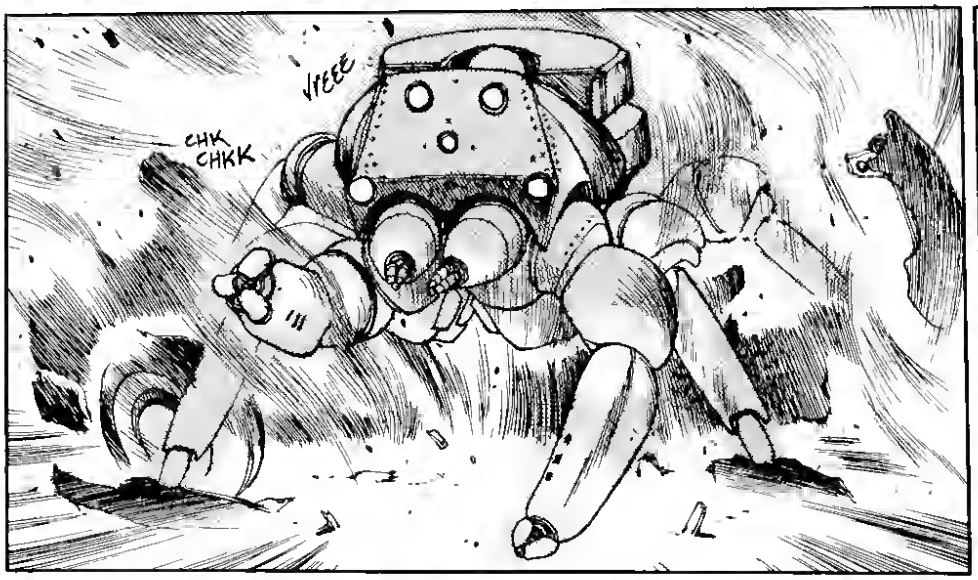
TOGUSA! HAVE THE FUCHIKOMA TAKE OUT THAT TRUCK *NOW, NOW, NOW!!*

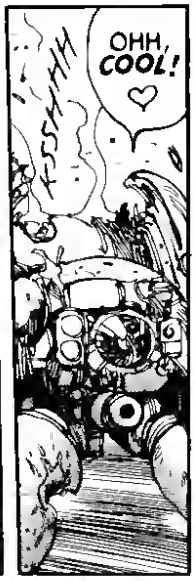
KHAK

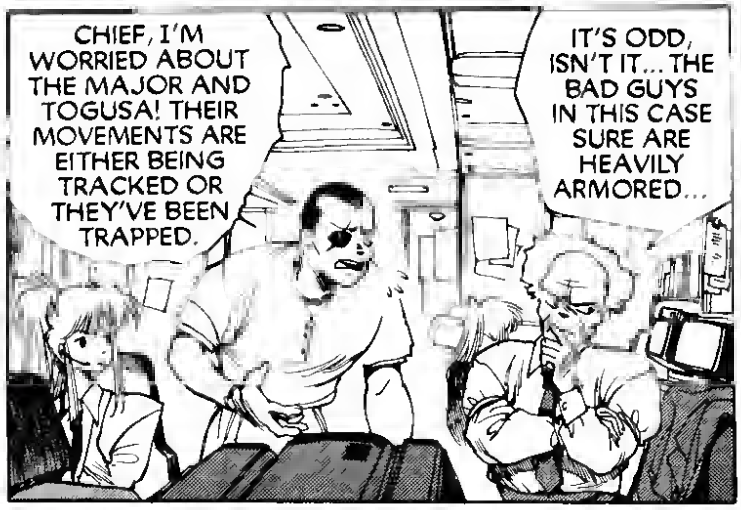
KRAMM
HRKK!

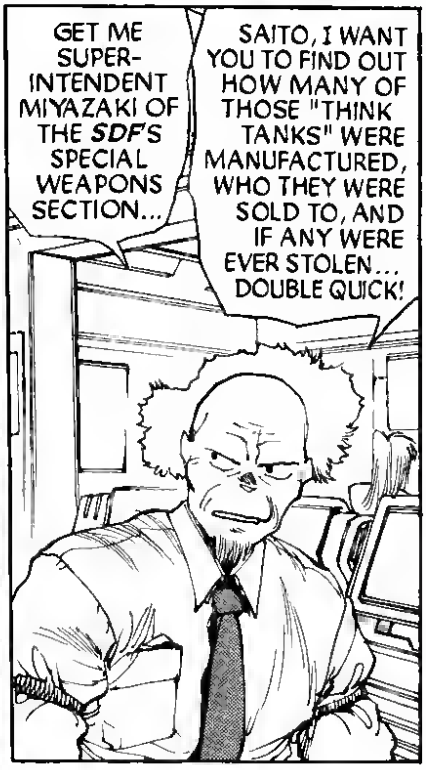
BKOOM
WOW...
WHOO
VYEEEE
YOW!
ZREEE
BKAM
BKAM
BKAM
VYEEE
CHKK
FUCHI-KOMA...?!
KUSANAGI TO *HQ!* GET US AT LEAST FOUR FULLY ARMORED FUCHIKOMAS *NOW!!*





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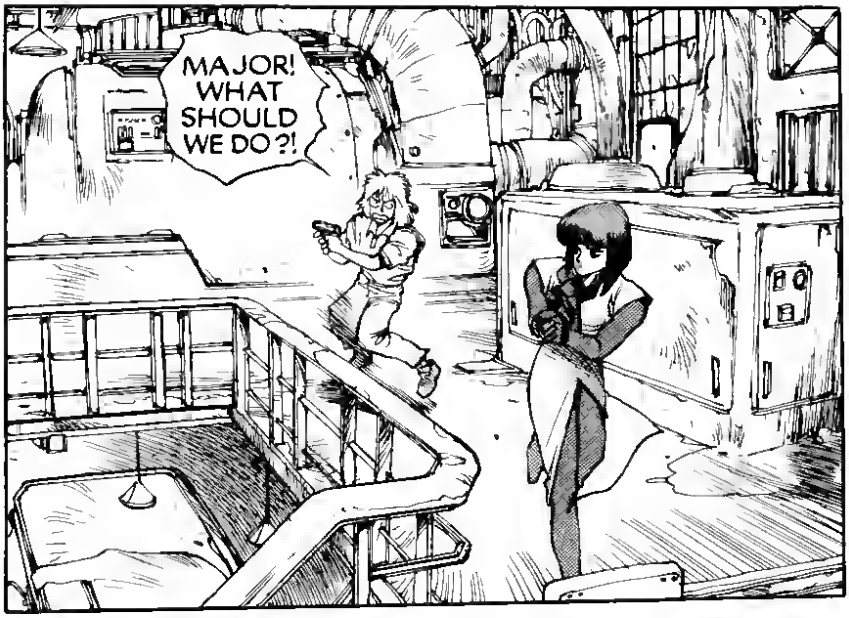
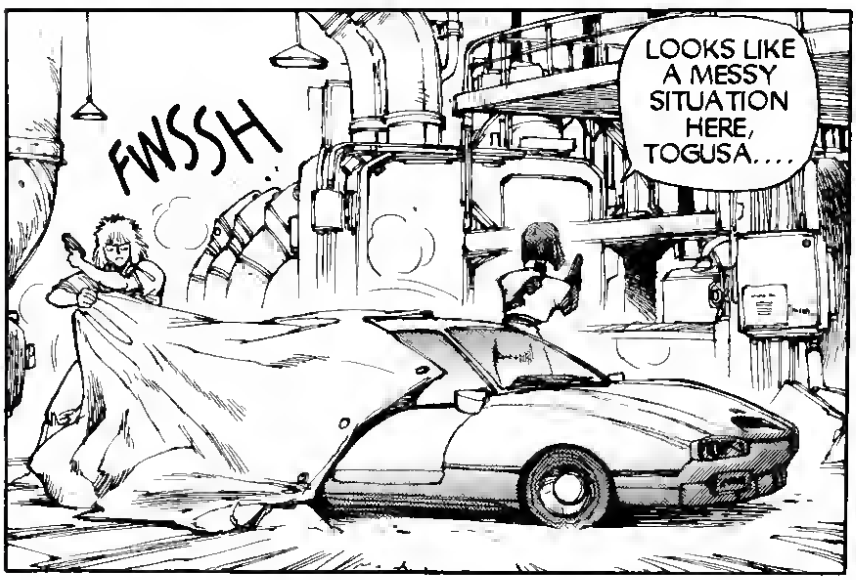
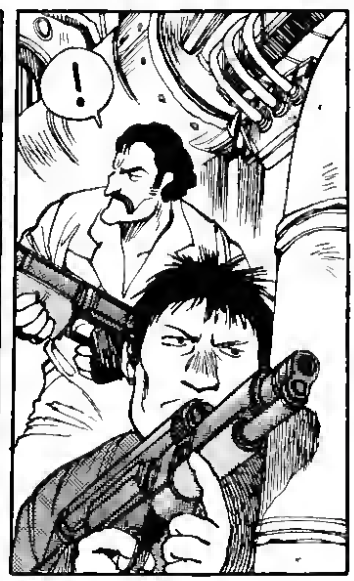

MAJOR! WHAT SHOULD WE DO?!

IT'LL TAKE A GOOD TWENTY MINUTES FOR BOMA AND PAZ TO GET HERE, SO WE'VE GOTTA STALL 'EM. IF WE CAN JUST GET INTO OUR CAR AND MOVE TO THE EDGE OF THE FACTORY WE CAN GIVE THEIR "TROOPS" THE SLIP...

SURE SEEMS LIKE WE'RE DEALING WITH MORE THAN JUST SOMA'S TERRORIST PALS...
THEY'RE TOO WELL ORGANIZED AND ARMED TO BE AN UNDER-GROUND GROUP....

YOU MEAN THEY'RE A *LEGAL* ORGA-NIZATION HELPING SOMA?


FWSSH
LOOKS LIKE A MESSY SITUATION HERE, TOGUSA....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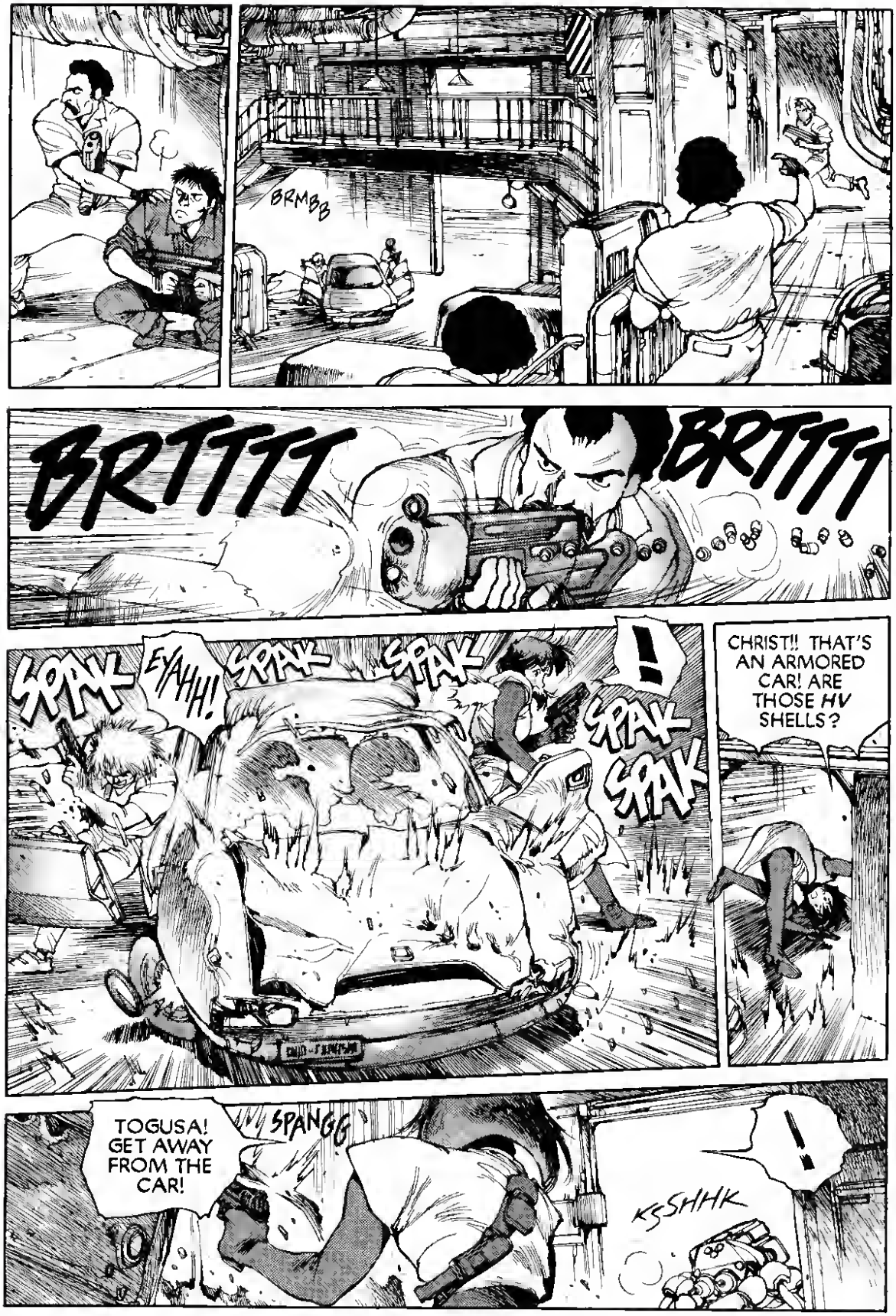


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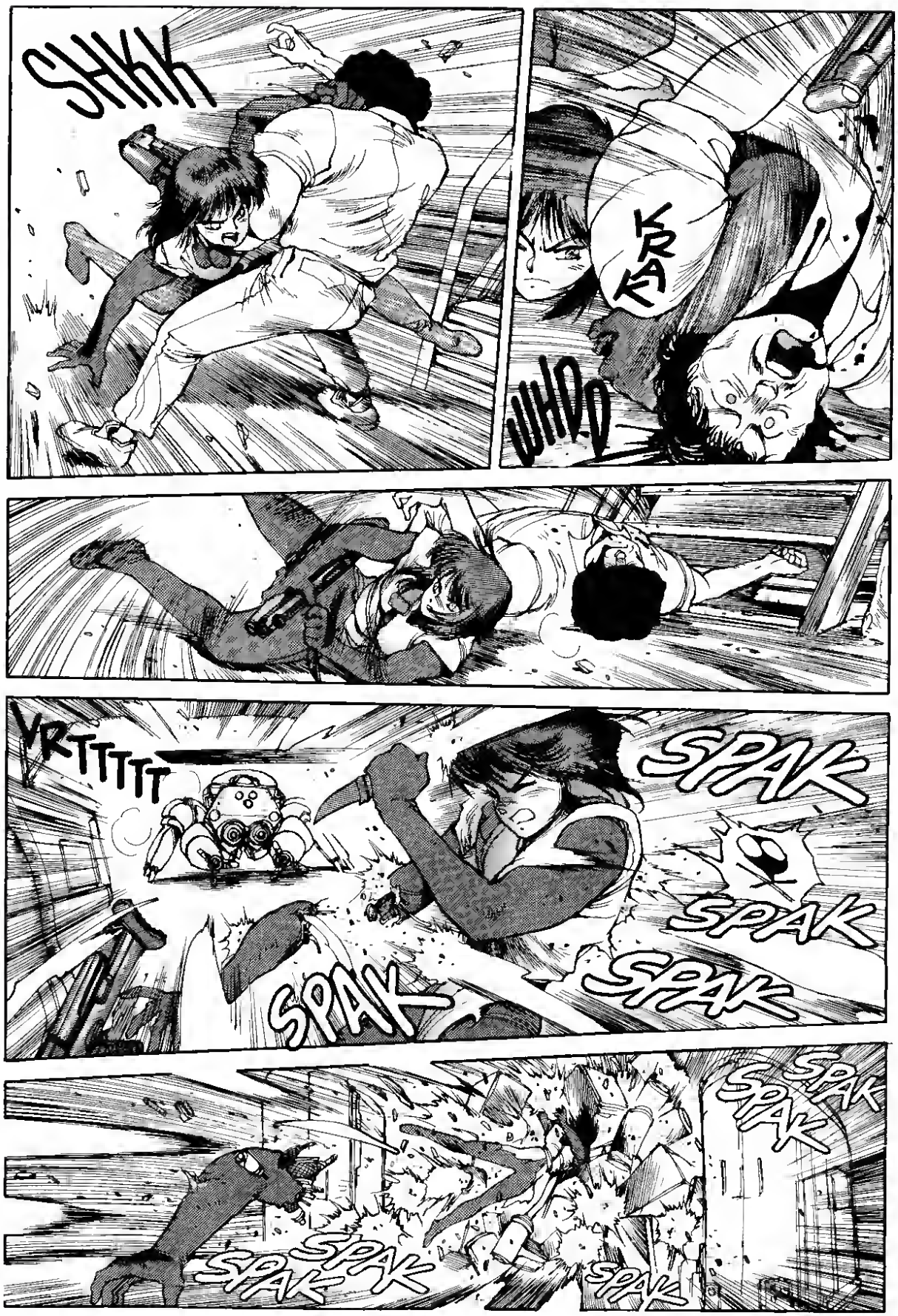
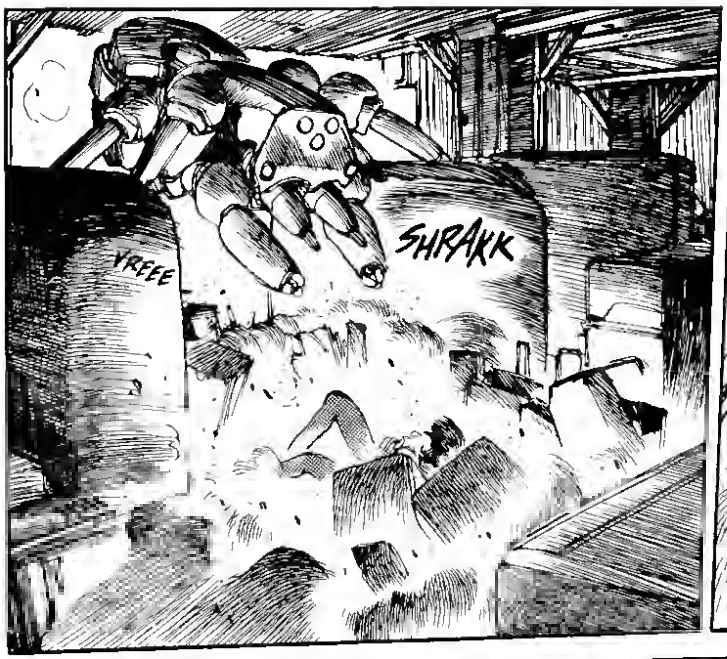
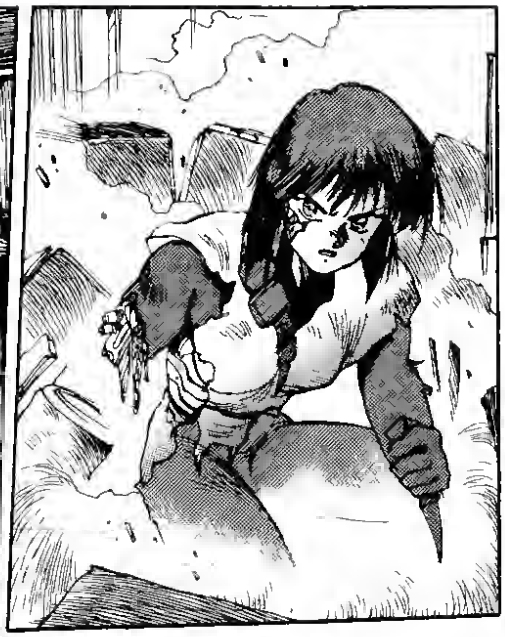
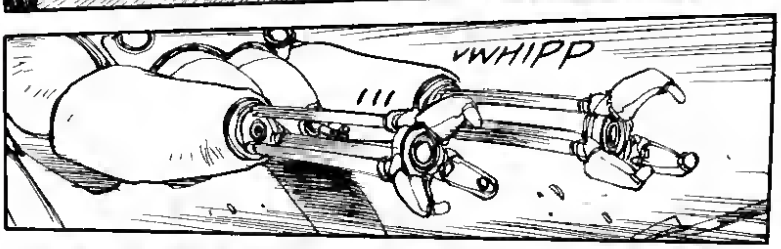
SLYEEE
BKRAMM
FWHUD
!
WHAM
CHIK


SHKK
KRA
WHOP
VRTTTTT
SPAK
SPAK
SPAK
SPAK
SPAK
SPAK
SPAK
SPAK

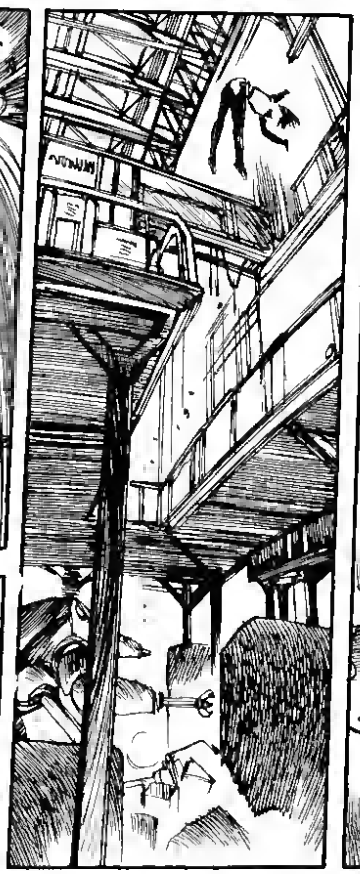

SHRAKK
VREEE




VWHIPP

TAK

SPSSH



WHAMM

WHCHAK
SPAK SPAK
SPAK
VRTTT
WHRAM
KRAK
HHNK...
TOGUSA! YOU COPY?!
TAK TAK TAK
YOU CAN KEEP AWAY FROM IT IF YOU MOVE ALONG THE ROOF...
...IT CAN'T CLIMB ON THIN WALLS OR CEILINGS BECAUSE ITS ARMOR'S TOO HEAVY...

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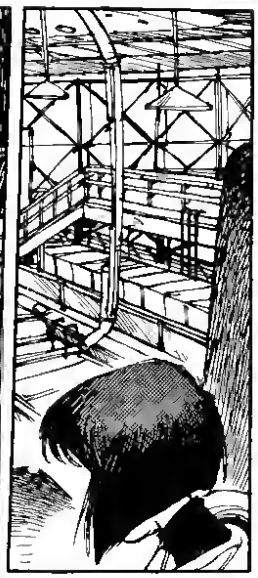
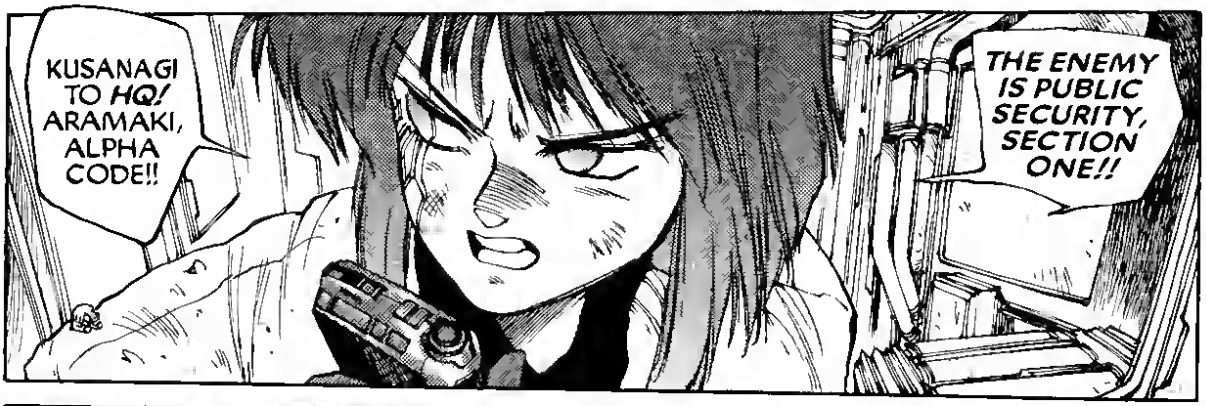
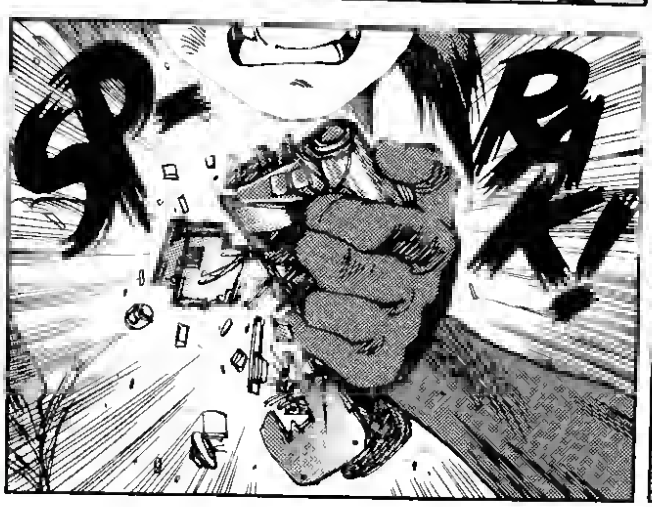
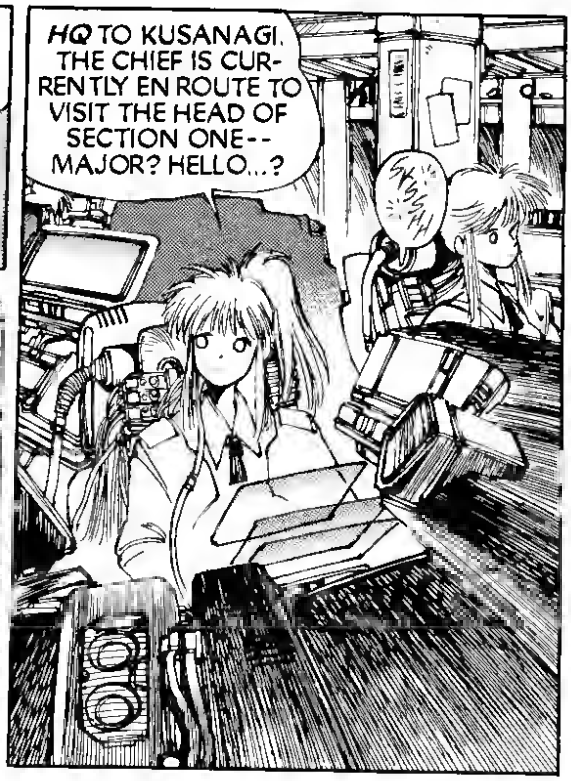
MOTOKO! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
WH... WHAT'S GOING ON?!

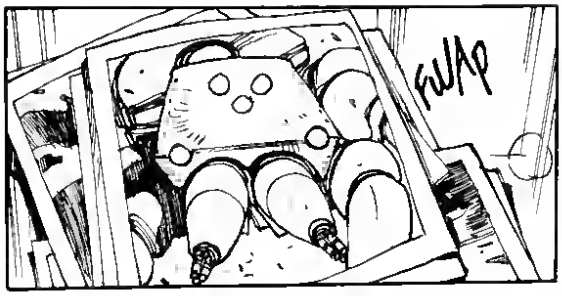



KUSANAGI TO *HQ!* ARAMAKI, ALPHA CODE!!
*THE ENEMY IS PUBLIC SECURITY, SECTION ONE!!*

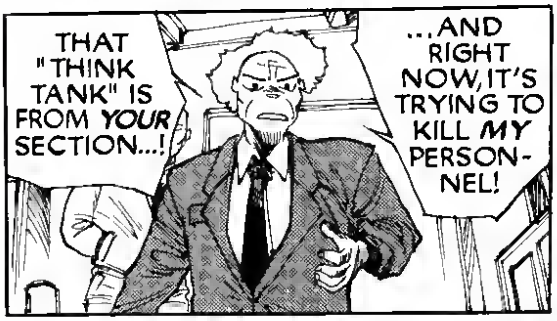
GOD-DAMN *S-1...!*

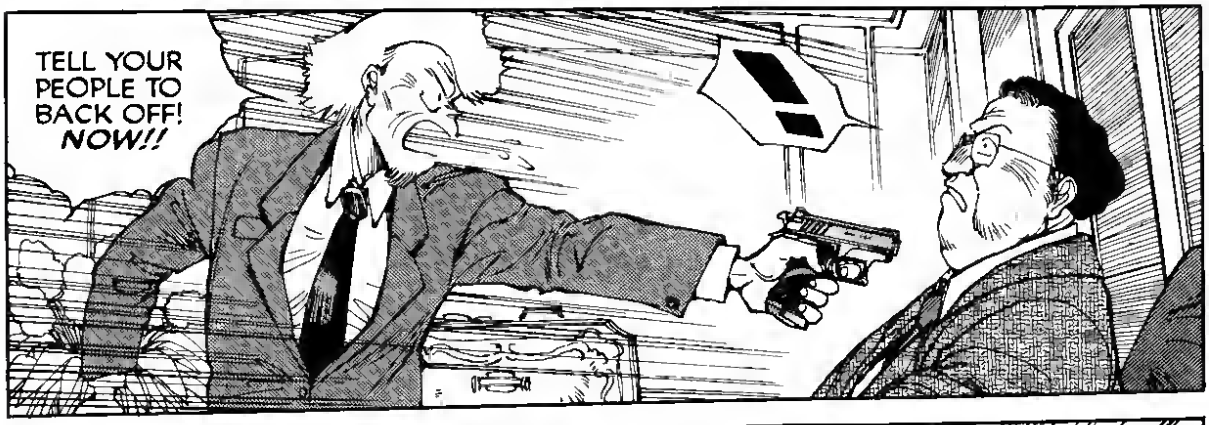

SA-
RA-
KI!

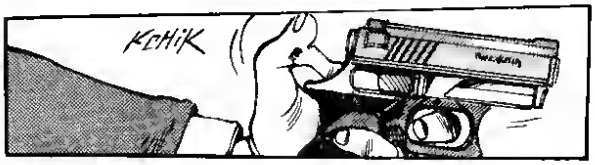

*HQ* TO KUSANAGI. THE CHIEF IS CURRENTLY EN ROUTE TO VISIT THE HEAD OF SECTION ONE-- MAJOR? HELLO...?
SSSSH


SWAP

YES...?
AND SO...?

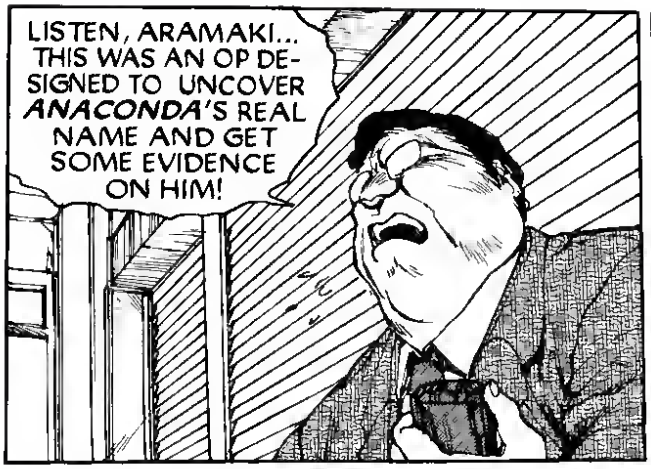

THAT "THINK TANK" IS FROM *YOUR* SECTION...!
...AND RIGHT NOW, IT'S TRYING TO KILL *MY* PERSONNEL!


TELL YOUR PEOPLE TO BACK OFF! *NOW!!*


KOHIK

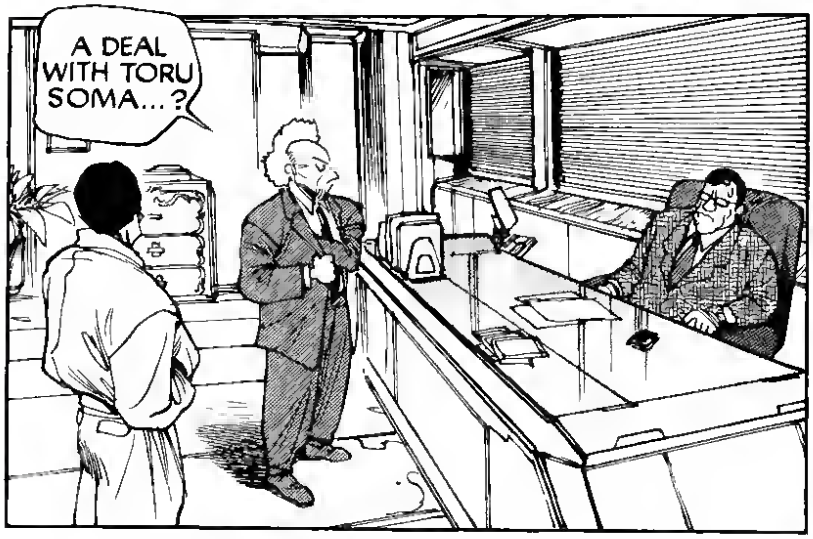
W-WAIT A SEC, ARAMAKI... C-CALM DOWN...
I'LL TELL THEM, I'LL TELL THEM!

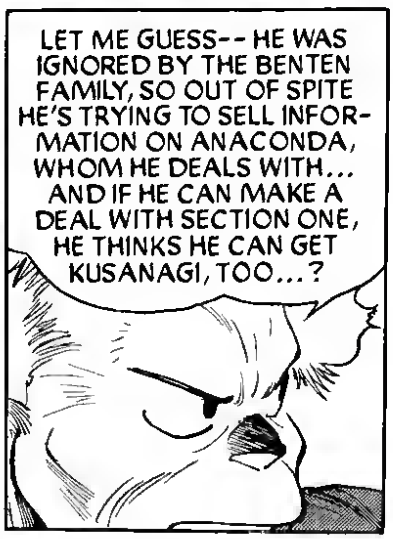
*AND* I'D LIKE AN EXPLANATION! YOUR ASS MAY BE IN THE WRINGER FOR THIS...!
ALL UNIT MEMBERS WITHDRAW-- THE OPERATION'S CANCELED! WITHDRAW!


LISTEN, ARAMAKI... THIS WAS AN OP DESIGNED TO UNCOVER *ANACONDA*'S REAL NAME AND GET SOME EVIDENCE ON HIM!

ANACONDA THE DRUG LORD? THE "GHOST OF SOUTH AMERICA"...?

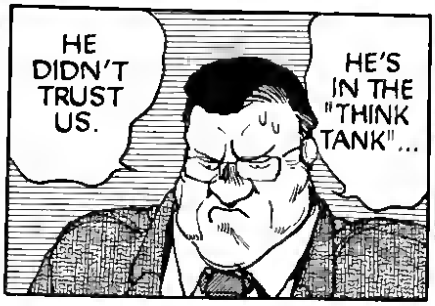
WE... WE HAD MADE A DEAL IN EXCHANGE FOR MAJOR KUSANAGI...

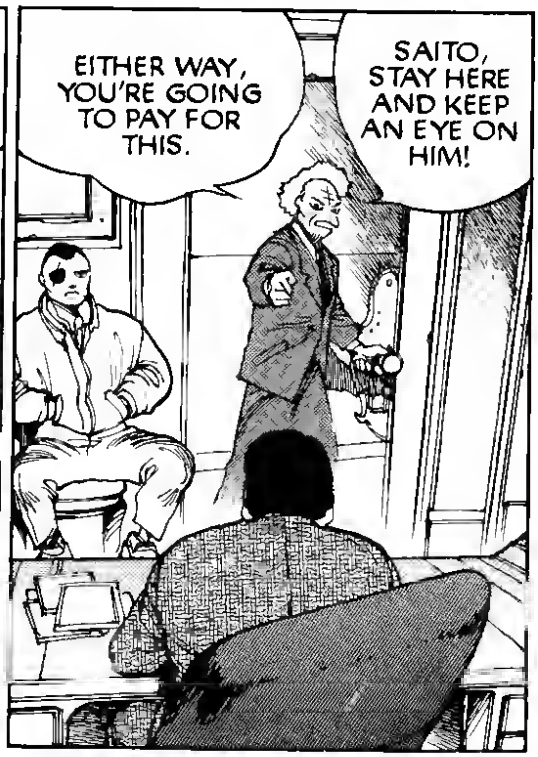

A DEAL WITH TORU SOMA...?

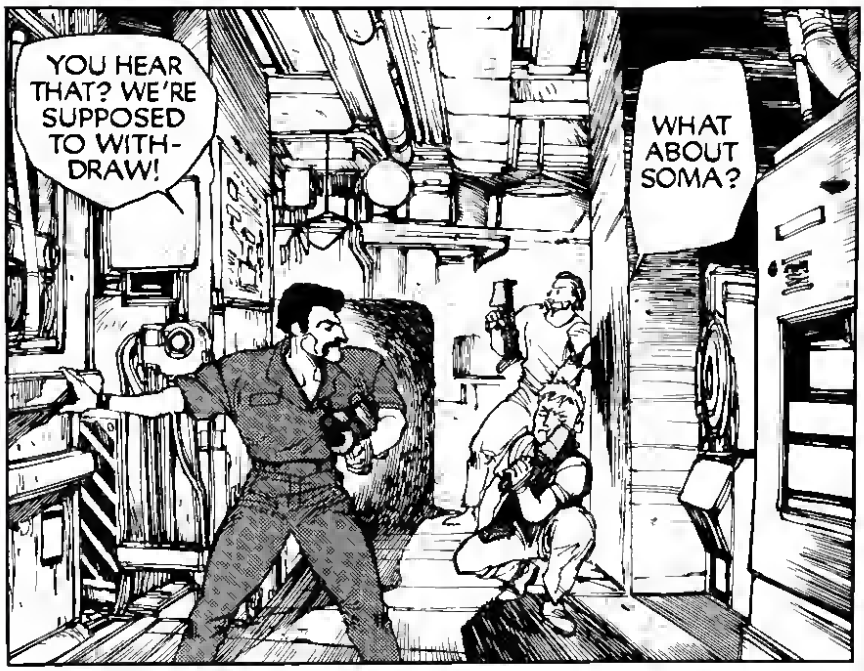

LET ME GUESS-- HE WAS IGNORED BY THE BENTEN FAMILY, SO OUT OF SPITE HE'S TRYING TO SELL INFORMATION ON ANACONDA, WHOM HE DEALS WITH... AND IF HE CAN MAKE A DEAL WITH SECTION ONE, HE THINKS HE CAN GET KUSANAGI, TOO...?

THE IDEA WAS FOR ANACONDA TO DESTROY THE BENTEN FAMILY AND THEN FOR US TO PUT DOWN ANACONDA. SOMA WOULD GET KUSANAGI...

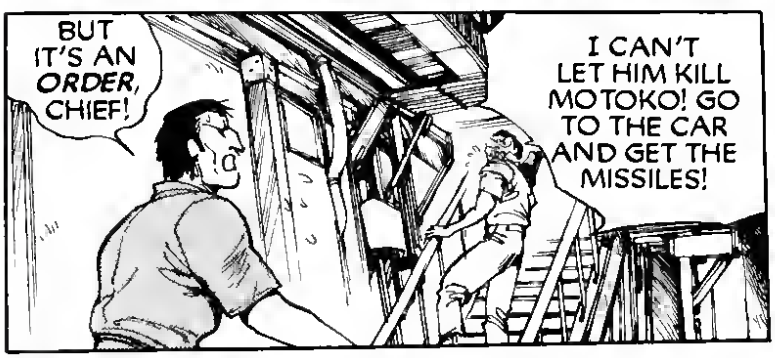
BUT THAT'S SOMA'S STRATEGY, NOT YOURS!
WHERE IS HE?!


HE DIDN'T TRUST US.
HE'S IN THE "THINK TANK"...


EITHER WAY, YOU'RE GOING TO PAY FOR THIS.
SAITO, STAY HERE AND KEEP AN EYE ON HIM!


YOU HEAR THAT? WE'RE SUPPOSED TO WITH-DRAW!
WHAT ABOUT SOMA?

CHIEF! DIDN'T YOU HEAR?! IT'S BEEN CALLED OFF!
LEMME GO! I'VE GOT A SCORE TO SET-TLE WITH SOMA!

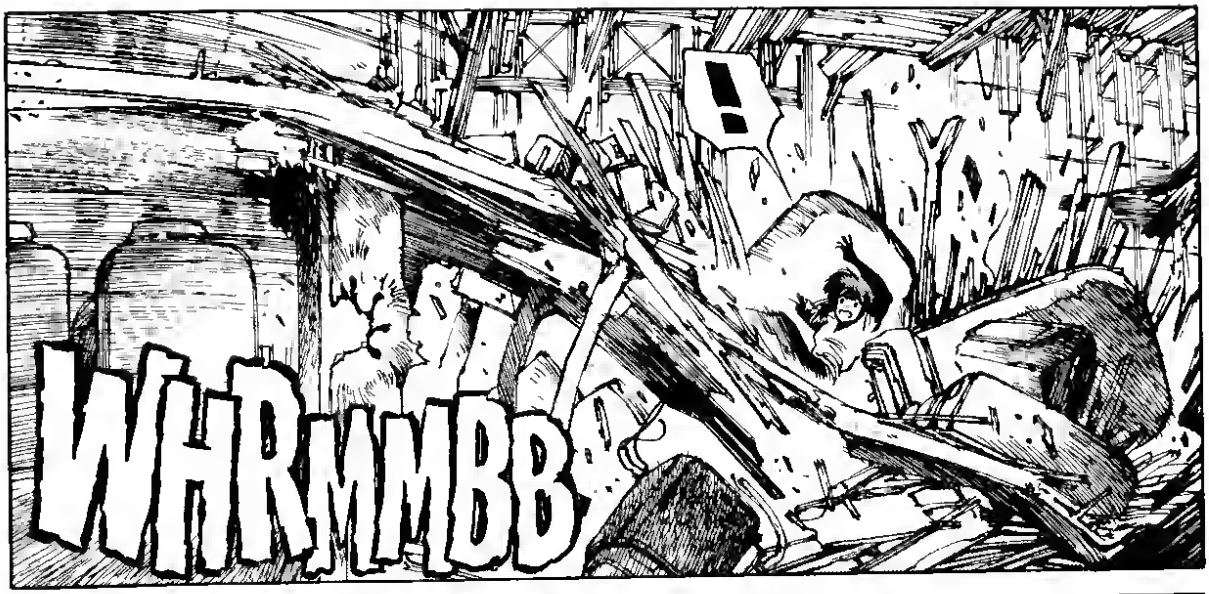

BUT IT'S AN *ORDER*, CHIEF!
I CAN'T LET HIM KILL MOTOKO! GO TO THE CAR AND GET THE MISSILES!

MAN, YOU ARE *STUB-BORN*, CHIEF....
YOU OWE ME ONE FOR THIS...

WHA--?!

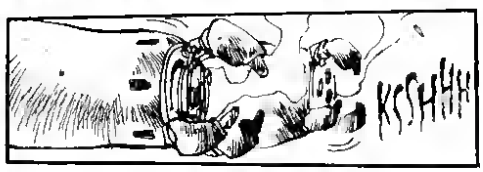
STOP! DON'T SHOOT!
THE GAME'S OVER, PAL!

GAME'S... OVER?!
MAJOR?!

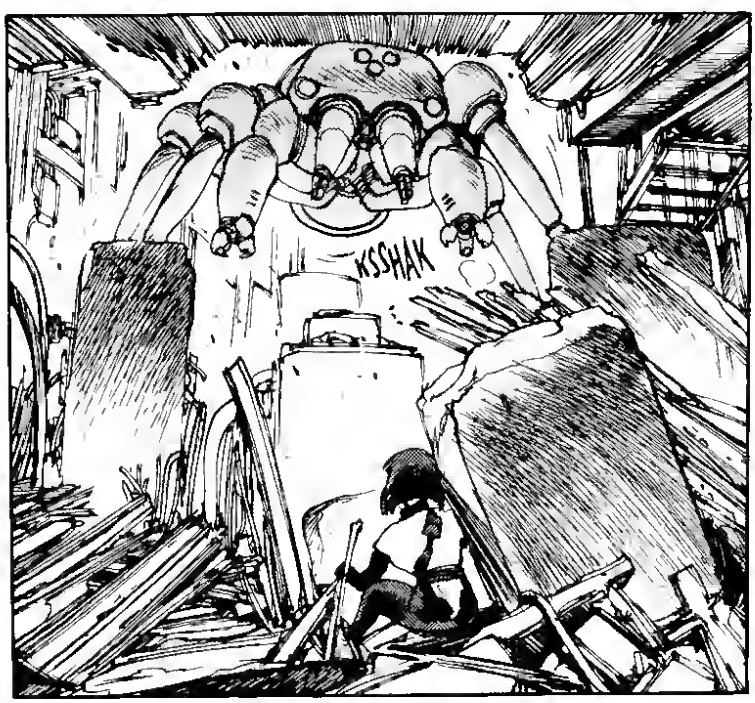

!
WHRMMBB

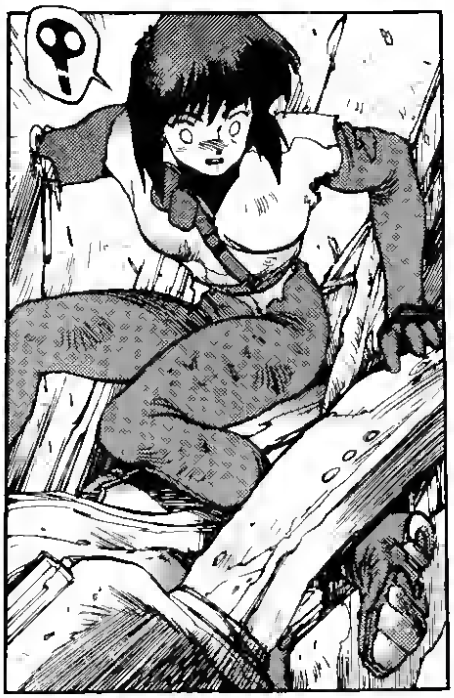
VREEEE

VRTTTTTT


KSSHHH

FINALLY OUT OF AMMO?!


KSSHAK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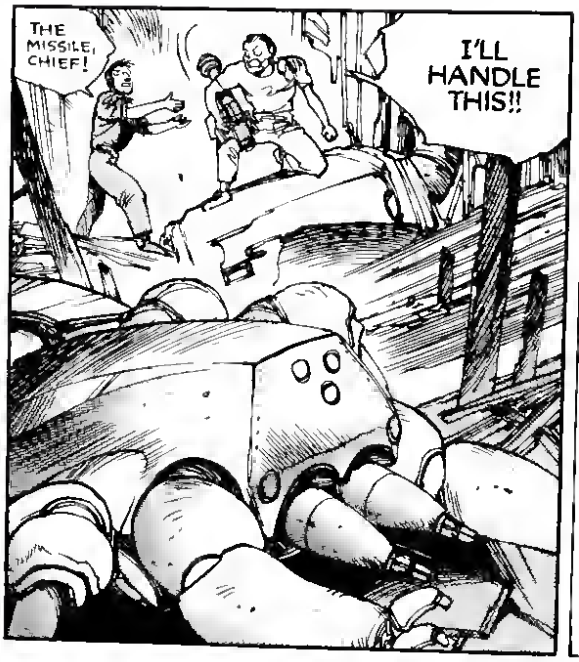
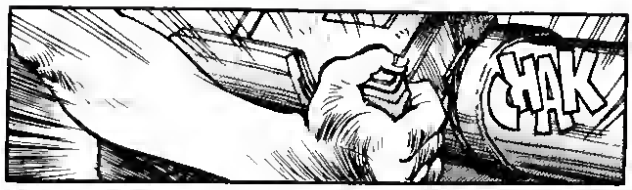
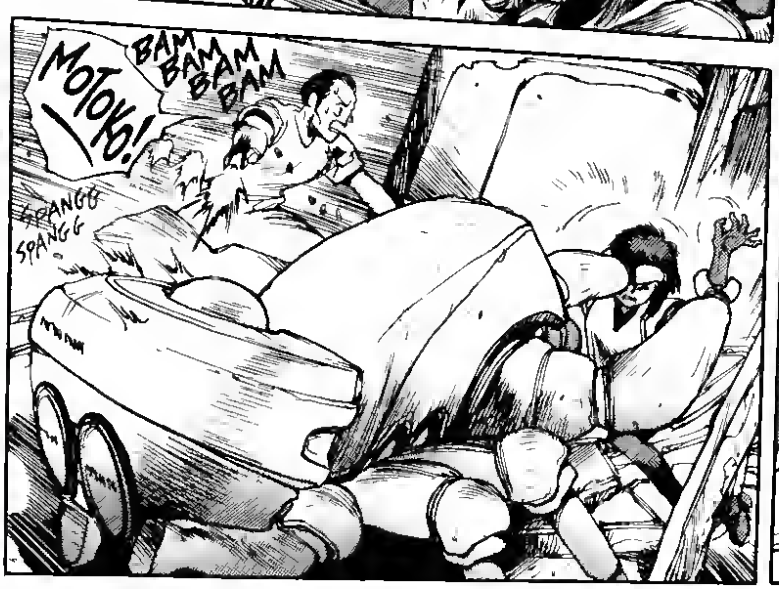

THE MISSILE, CHIEF!
I'LL HANDLE THIS!!


HAK

SZZKK
KKSSH
WHA--?!

SOMA MUST HAVE SEEN US LOAD IT IN THE CAR! HE'S SABOTAGED IT!
SHIT!

SHAKK
HHK!


MOTOKO!
BAM BAM BAM BAM
SPANGG SPANGG

NGG!
KRK

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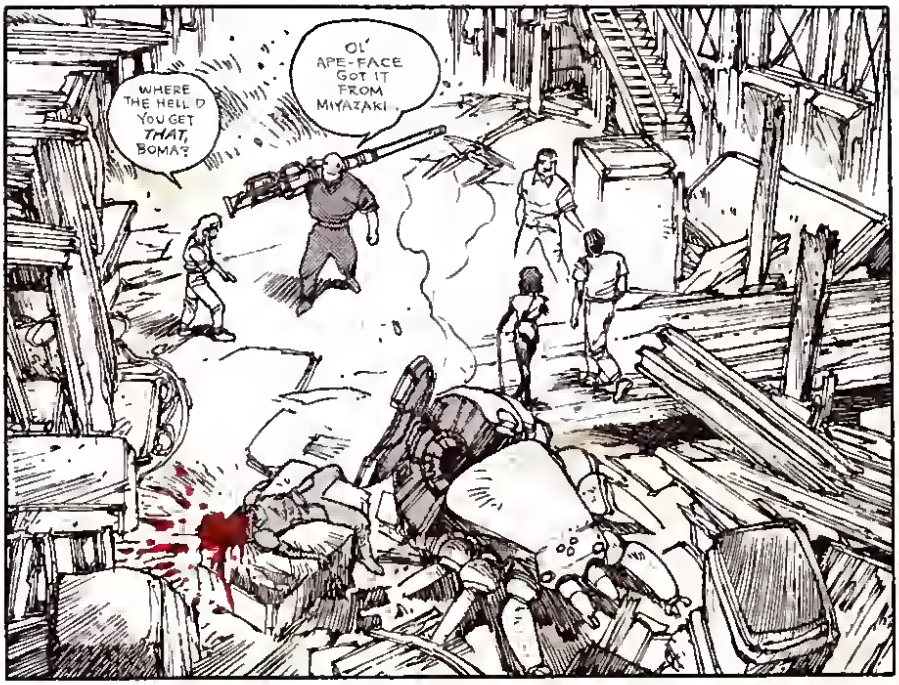
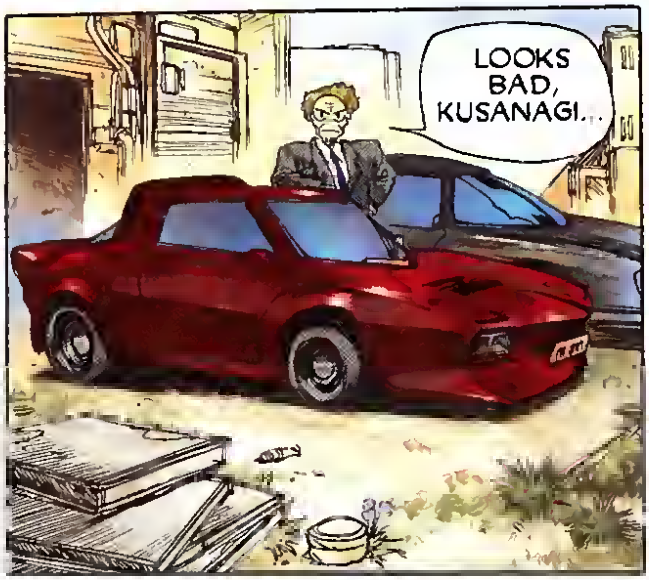
WHOK
FWDD
MAJOR!
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
SPAK SPAK SPAK
SPLSSH
BYE-BYE, TERRORIST...
IF YOU'VE GOT A PROBLEM WITH *THIS* WORLD, MAKE SURE YOU STAY IN THE ONE YOU'RE GOING TO--*HELL*.

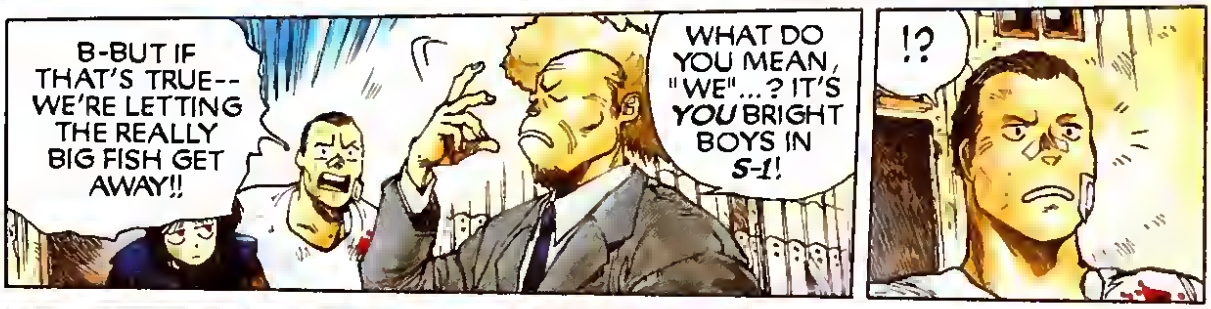

WHERE THE HELL D YOU GET THAT, BOMA?
OL' APE-FACE GOT IT FROM MIYAZAKI.

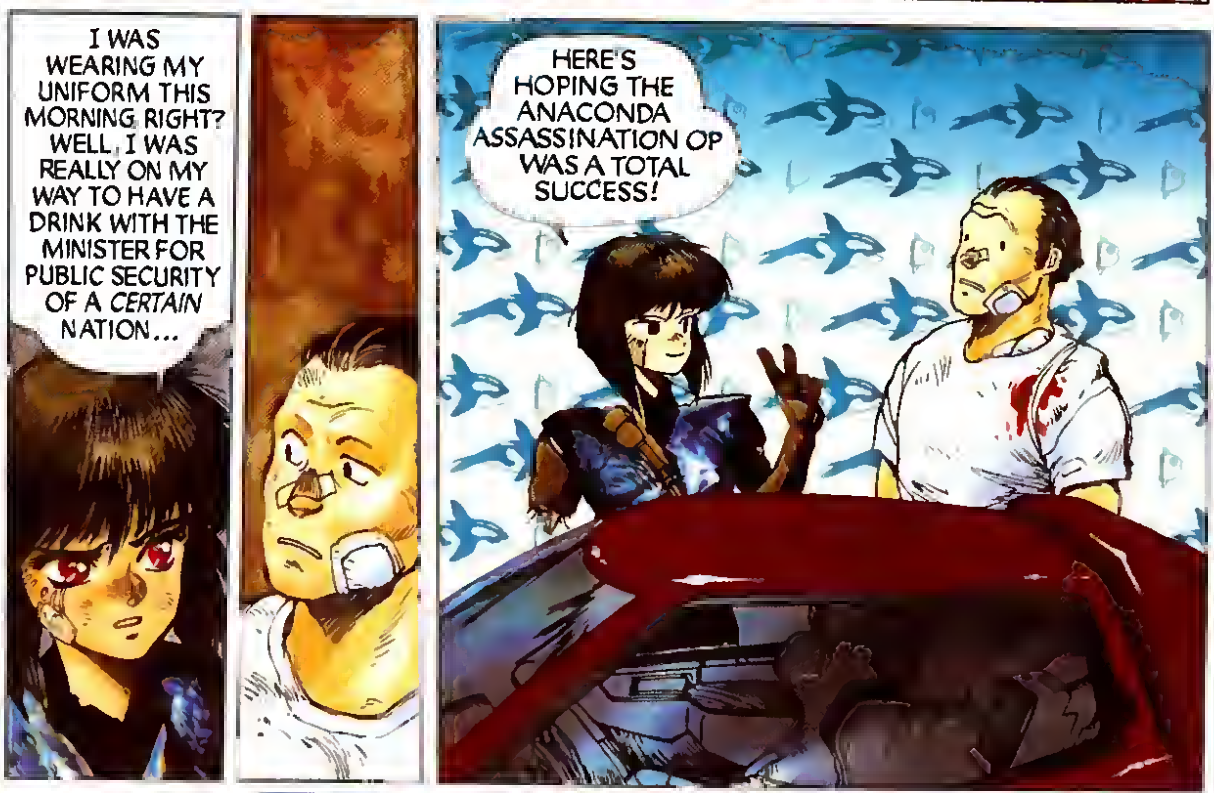
LOOKS LIKE YOUR EXTERIOR TOOK QUITE A BEATING MAJOR
TAKE TOGUSA TO THE HOSPITAL FIRST. HE'S REALLY BLEEDING...

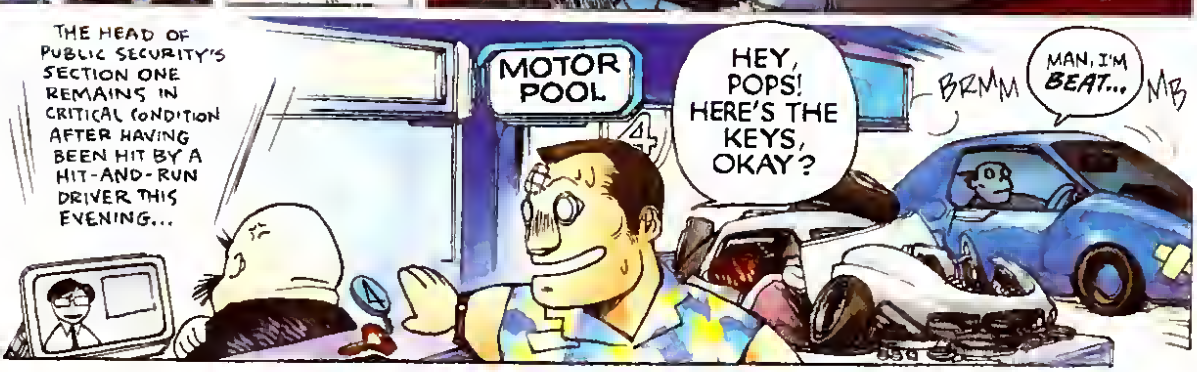

LOOKS BAD, KUSANAGI...

WHEN'D YOU LEARN THE HEAD OF SECTION ONE WAS BEING MANIPULATED BY SOMA, CHIEF?
WHEN I TOLD HIM WE'D BACK-TRACED THE TANK TO *S-1*, HE "VOLUNTEERED" THE INFORMATION.

SOMA PROBABLY APPROACHED THE BENTEN FAMILY TO GET INFORMATION THAT HE THOUGHT WOULD WORK AS BAIT WITH SECTION ONE.
I BET HE NEVER REALLY KNEW ANACONDA--

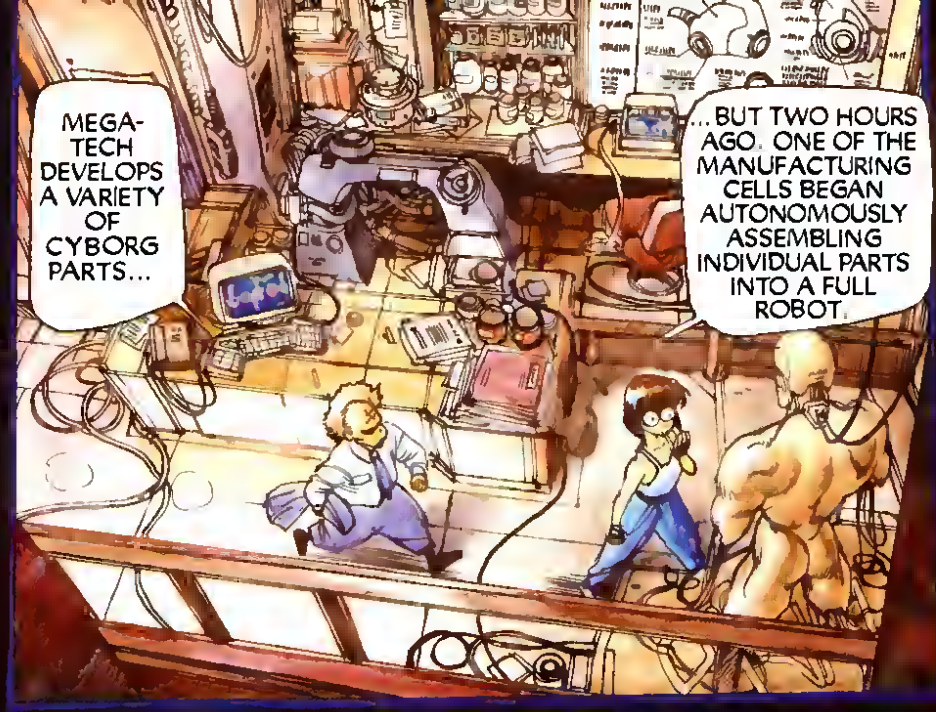

B-BUT IF THAT'S TRUE-- WE'RE LETTING THE REALLY BIG FISH GET AWAY!!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "WE"...? IT'S YOU BRIGHT BOYS IN S-1!
!?


I WAS WEARING MY UNIFORM THIS MORNING, RIGHT? WELL, I WAS REALLY ON MY WAY TO HAVE A DRINK WITH THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC SECURITY OF A CERTAIN NATION...
HERE'S HOPING THE ANACONDA ASSASSINATION OP WAS A TOTAL SUCCESS!

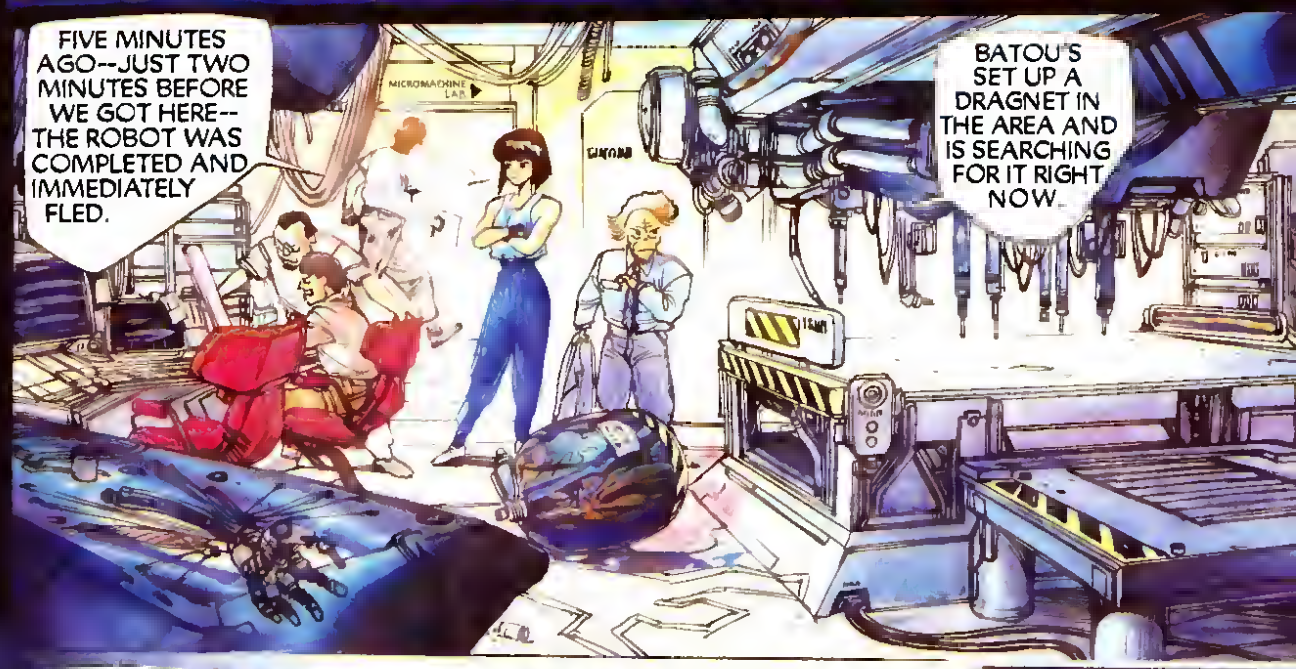

THE HEAD OF PUBLIC SECURITY'S SECTION ONE REMAINS IN CRITICAL CONDITION AFTER HAVING BEEN HIT BY A HIT-AND-RUN DRIVER THIS EVENING...
MOTOR POOL
HEY, POPS! HERE'S THE KEYS, OKAY?
BRMM
MAN, I'M BEAT...
MB

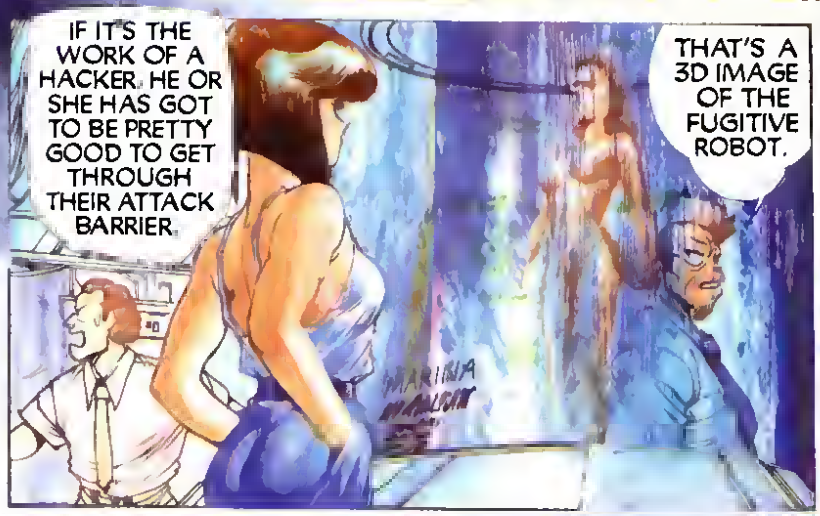
09
BYE BYE
CLAY
15. 7. 2030
BEER

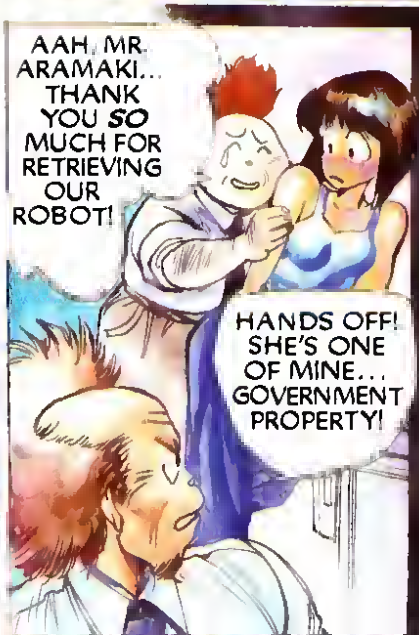
I HATE IT WHEN IT RAINS...
MEGATECH BODY INC.
IT'S SUCH AN EMPTY SOUND, PIERCING MY PROSTHETIC BODY AND SHROUDING MY GHOST...
SKREEK
GOOD-- YOU'RE HERE. I WANT YOU TO SEARCH THIS SECTION FIRST!
"MEGA-TECH BODY INC., R&D"...?
COME ON-- LET'S GO! WHAT ARE YOU STANDING AROUND GAWKING FOR?!


MEGA-TECH DEVELOPS A VARIETY OF CYBORG PARTS...
...BUT TWO HOURS AGO. ONE OF THE MANUFACTURING CELLS BEGAN AUTONOMOUSLY ASSEMBLING INDIVIDUAL PARTS INTO A FULL ROBOT.

IT'S A MILITARY MODEL, WITH THE SAME TOP SECRET CLASSIFICATION AS YOU FOLKS.

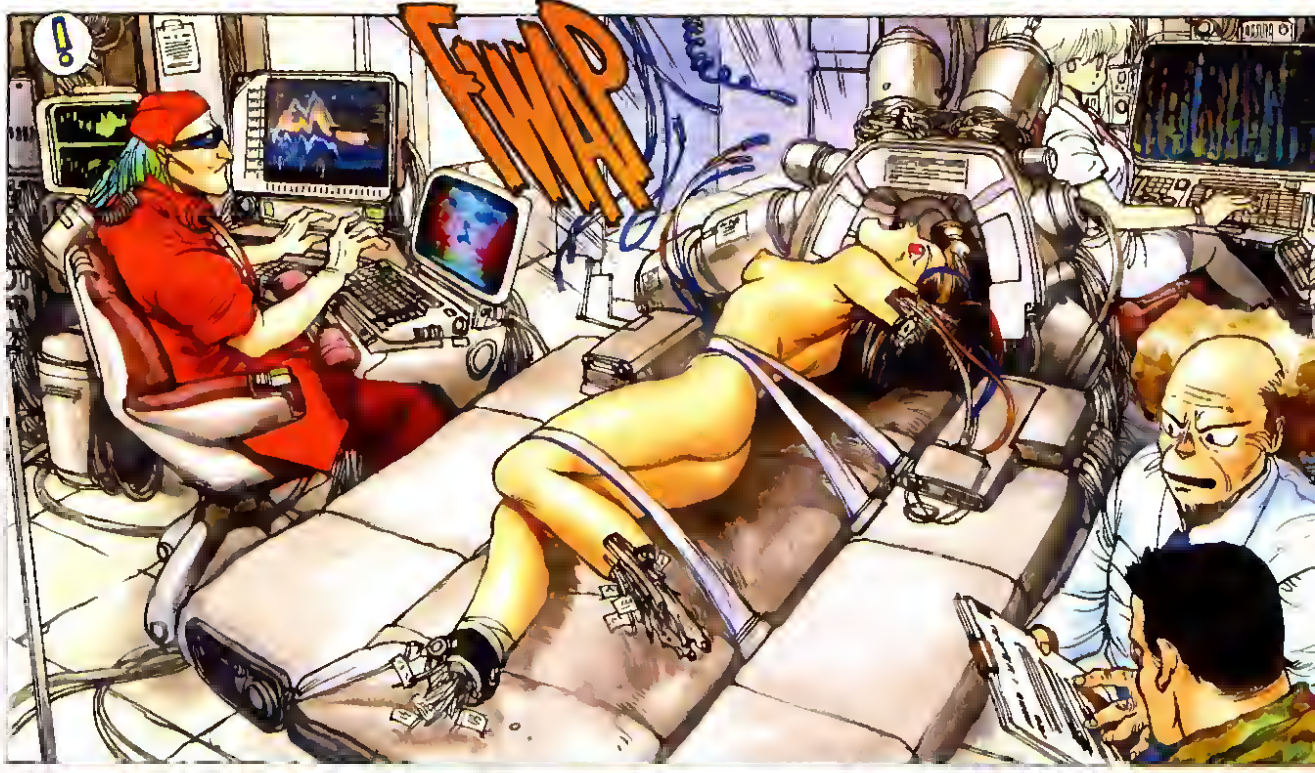

FIVE MINUTES AGO--JUST TWO MINUTES BEFORE WE GOT HERE--THE ROBOT WAS COMPLETED AND IMMEDIATELY FLED.
MICROMACHINE LAB
BATOU'S SET UP A DRAGNET IN THE AREA AND IS SEARCHING FOR IT RIGHT NOW.

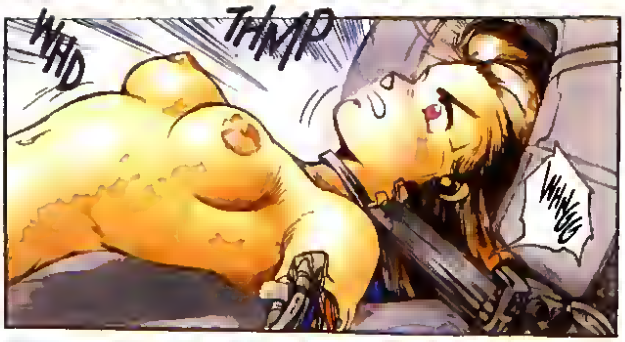

IF IT'S THE WORK OF A HACKER, HE OR SHE HAS GOT TO BE PRETTY GOOD TO GET THROUGH THEIR ATTACK BARRIER.
THAT'S A 3D IMAGE OF THE FUGITIVE ROBOT.

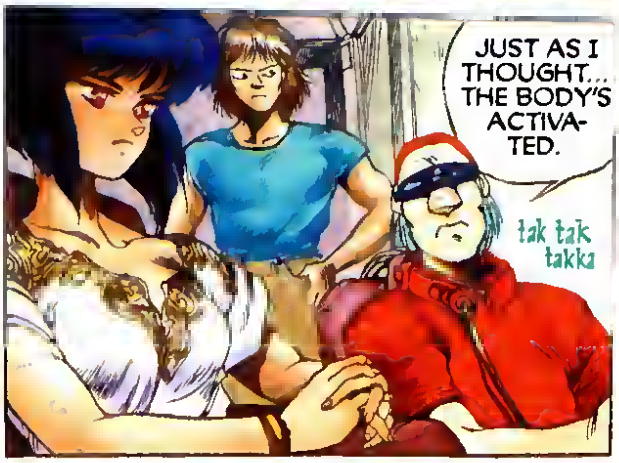

AAH, MR. ARAMAKI... THANK YOU *SO* MUCH FOR RETRIEVING OUR ROBOT!
HANDS OFF! SHE'S ONE OF MINE... GOVERNMENT PROPERTY!

YOU KNOW THAT DRUGGED-OUT KID YOU FOUND IN A STATION WAGON?! TAKE HER IN, JUST TO BE SAFE.
WHAT?! YOU CAN TELL IF SHE'S A ROBOT BY THE *WEIGHT*, STUPID!
IT'S GOTTA BE AROUND HERE! KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED!
!
SKREEEEE
OH, GOD!

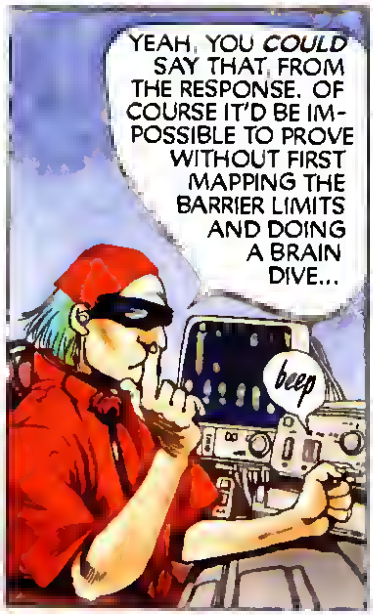
SZZKK
FLK

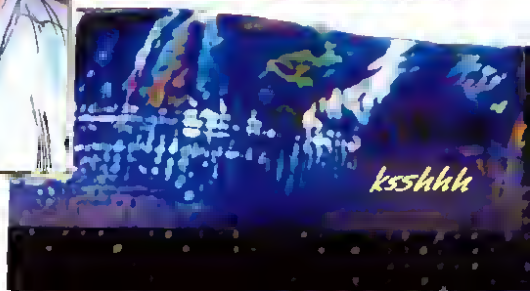

!
FWAP

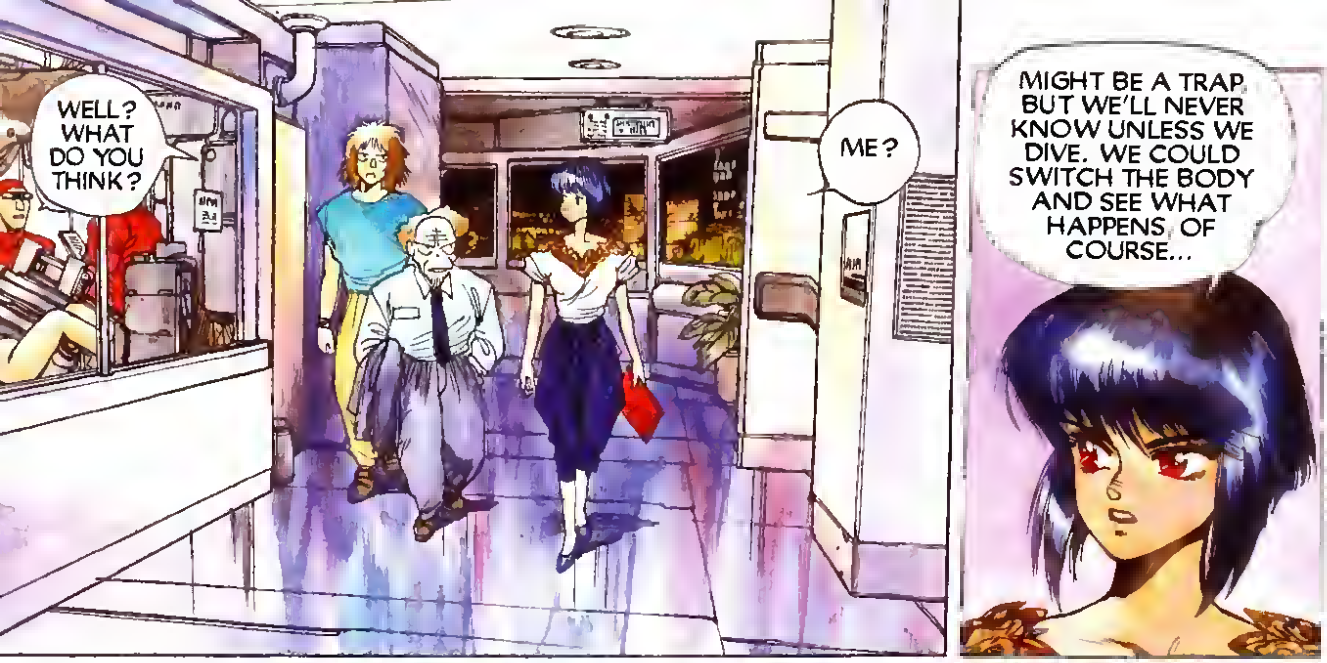

WHO
THMP
WHNG

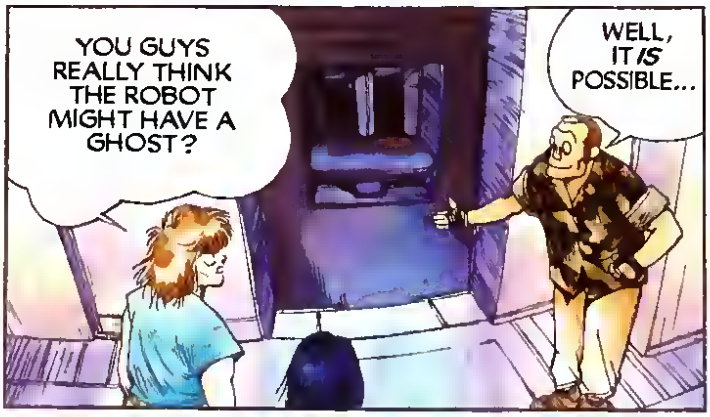

JUST AS I THOUGHT... THE BODY'S ACTIVATED.
tak tak takka

SO IN OTHER WORDS, THE ROBOT'S GOT A GHOST BARRIER IN ITS CYBER-BRAIN... RIGHT?

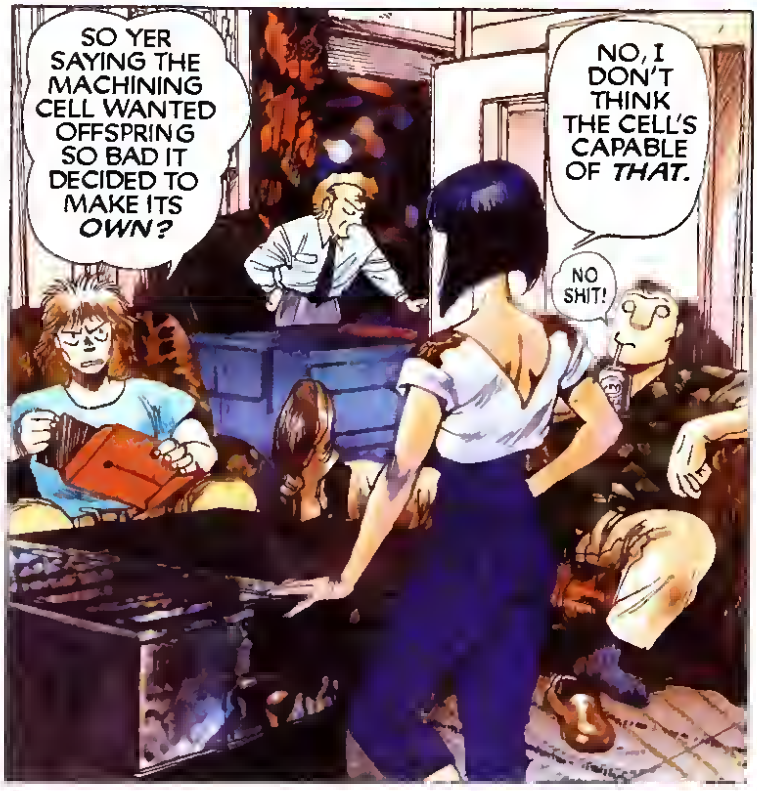

YEAH, YOU COULD SAY THAT, FROM THE RESPONSE. OF COURSE IT'D BE IMPOSSIBLE TO PROVE WITHOUT FIRST MAPPING THE BARRIER LIMITS AND DOING A BRAIN DIVE...
beep

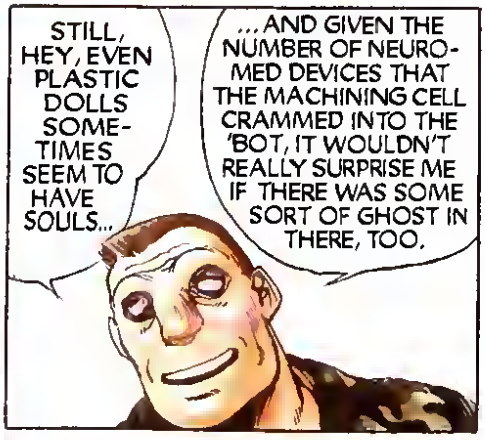

ksshhh

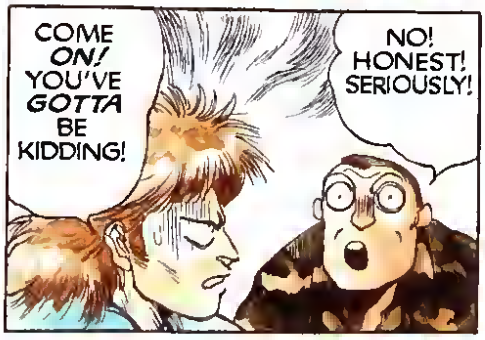

WELL? WHAT DO YOU THINK?
ME?
MIGHT BE A TRAP, BUT WE'LL NEVER KNOW UNLESS WE DIVE. WE COULD SWITCH THE BODY AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS, OF COURSE...

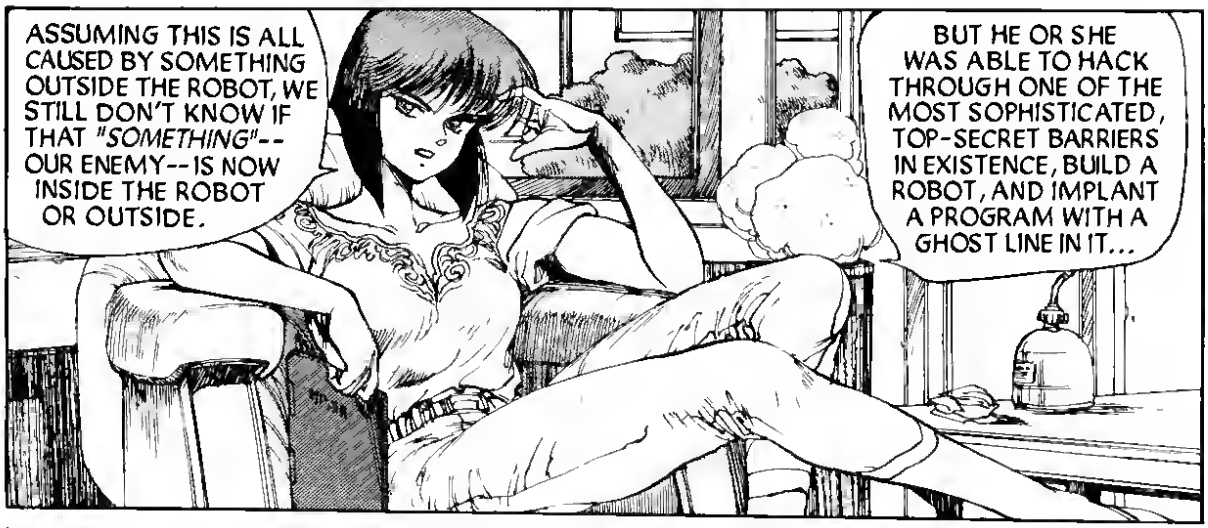

YOU GUYS REALLY THINK THE ROBOT MIGHT HAVE A GHOST?
WELL, IT *IS* POSSIBLE...

THERE WAS A SLIGHT RESEMBLANCE TO THE SIMULATED GHOST LINES YOU FIND WHEN THEY'VE BEEN DUBBED...
fsshhh

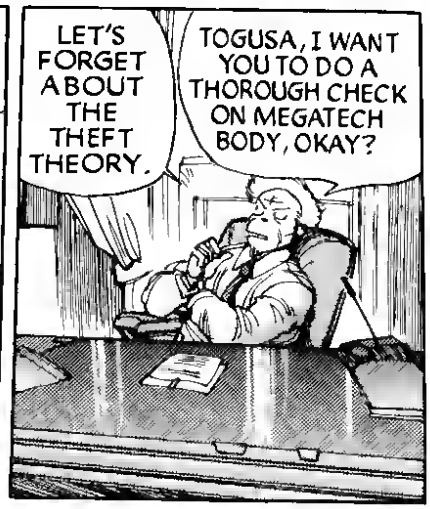

SO YER SAYING THE MACHINING CELL WANTED OFFSPRING SO BAD IT DECIDED TO MAKE ITS *OWN?*
NO, I DON'T THINK THE CELL'S CAPABLE OF *THAT.*
NO SHIT!


STILL, HEY, EVEN PLASTIC DOLLS SOMETIMES SEEM TO HAVE SOULS...
...AND GIVEN THE NUMBER OF NEURO-MED DEVICES THAT THE MACHINING CELL CRAMMED INTO THE 'BOT, IT WOULDN'T REALLY SURPRISE ME IF THERE WAS SOME SORT OF GHOST IN THERE, TOO.

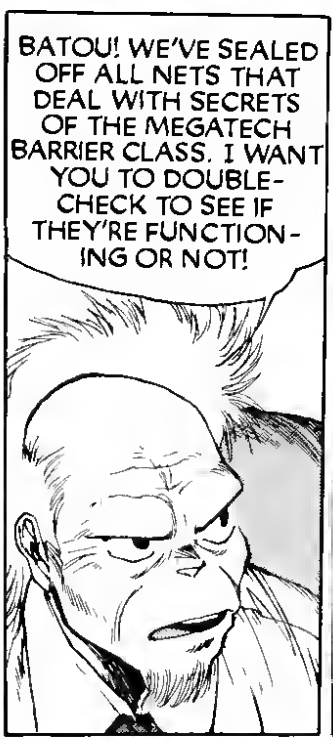

COME *ON!* YOU'VE *GOTTA* BE KIDDING!
NO! HONEST! SERIOUSLY!

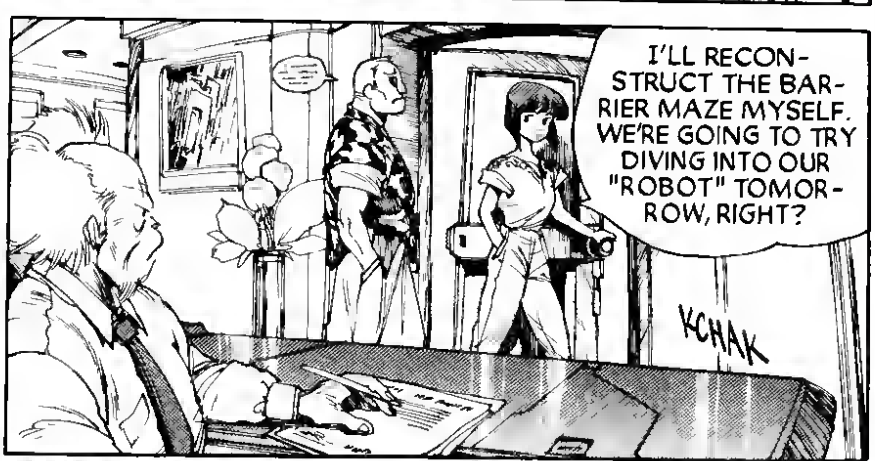

ASSUMING THIS IS ALL CAUSED BY SOMETHING OUTSIDE THE ROBOT, WE STILL DON'T KNOW IF THAT "SOMETHING"-- OUR ENEMY--IS NOW INSIDE THE ROBOT OR OUTSIDE.
BUT HE OR SHE WAS ABLE TO HACK THROUGH ONE OF THE MOST SOPHISTICATED, TOP-SECRET BARRIERS IN EXISTENCE, BUILD A ROBOT, AND IMPLANT A PROGRAM WITH A GHOST LINE IN IT...

...AND DO IT ALL SO AS TO BE EASILY CAUGHT.
SO WHAT'S THE PURPOSE?

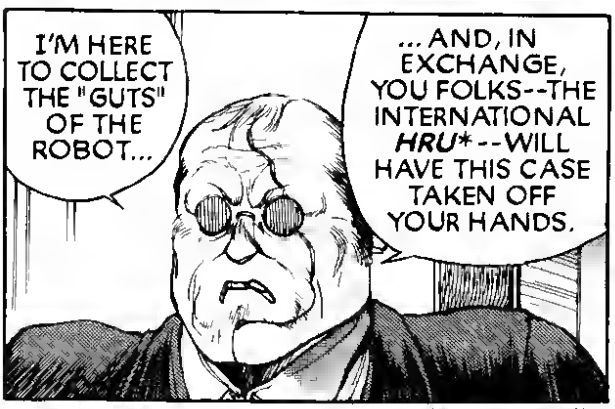

LET'S FORGET ABOUT THE THEFT THEORY.
TOGUSA, I WANT YOU TO DO A THOROUGH CHECK ON MEGATECH BODY, OKAY?

ER, CHIEF, THIS WAS MY DAY TO GO HOME AND CATCH A FEW WINKS--
A COUPLE DAYS WITHOUT SLEEP WON'T KILL YOU! TAKE A FEW TRAINEES WITH YOU AND HOP TO IT!

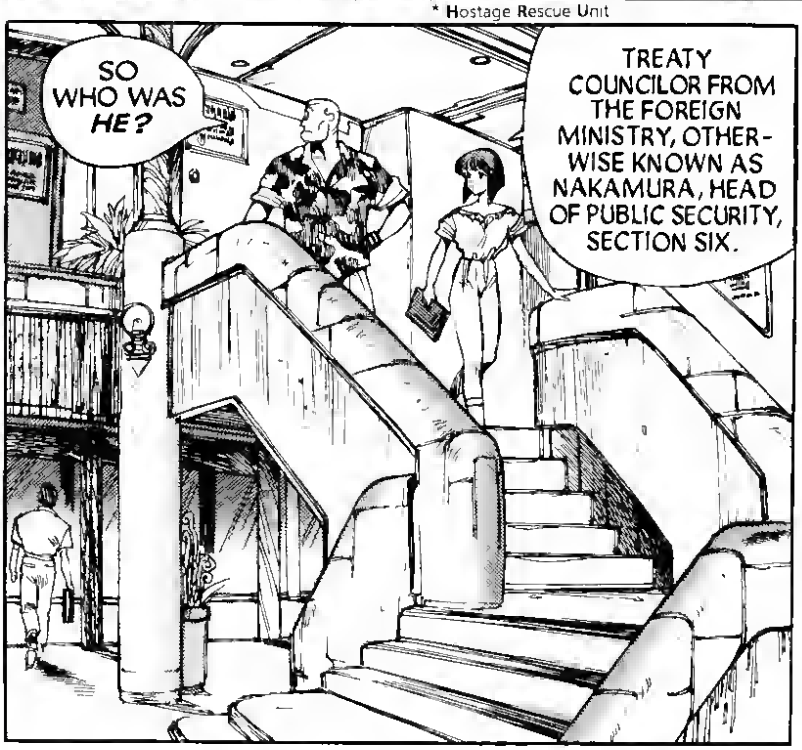

BATOU! WE'VE SEALED OFF ALL NETS THAT DEAL WITH SECRETS OF THE MEGATECH BARRIER CLASS. I WANT YOU TO DOUBLE-CHECK TO SEE IF THEY'RE FUNCTIONING OR NOT!

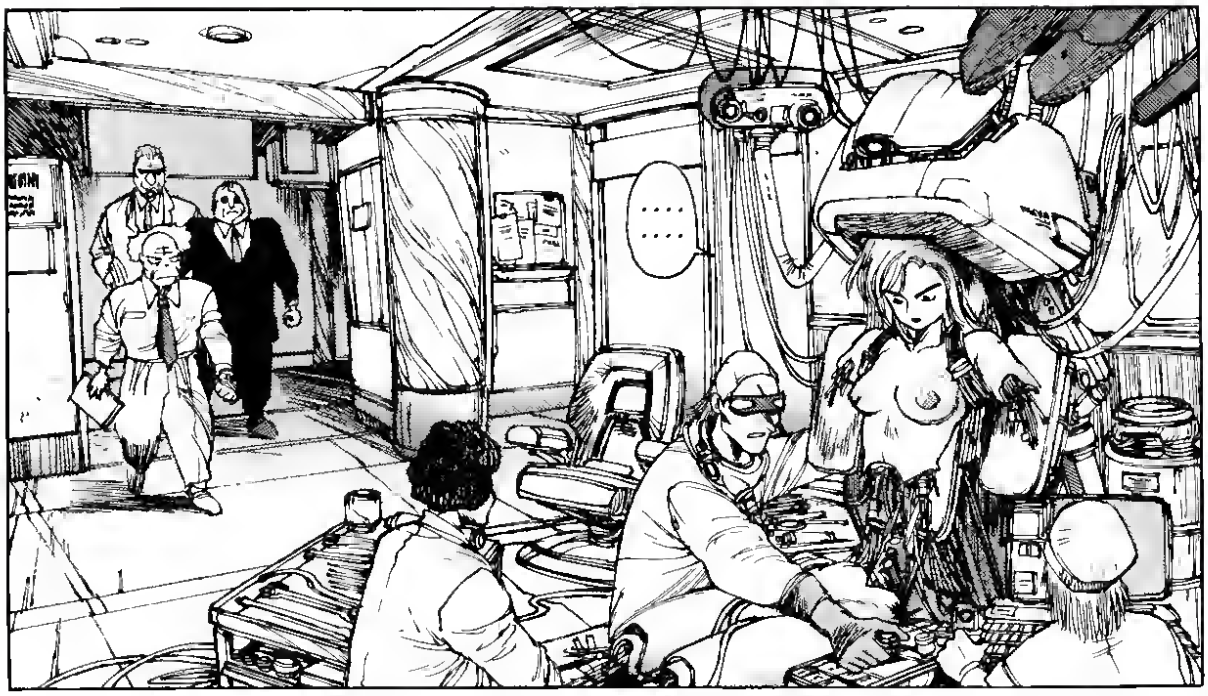

I'LL RECONSTRUCT THE BARRIER MAZE MYSELF. WE'RE GOING TO TRY DIVING INTO OUR "ROBOT" TOMORROW, RIGHT?
KCHAK

CHIEF, A MR. NAKAMURA FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IS HERE TO SEE YOU.
?
SEND HIM IN...



* Hostage Rescue Unit

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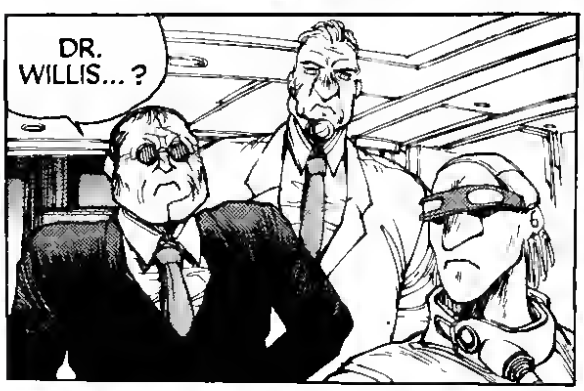
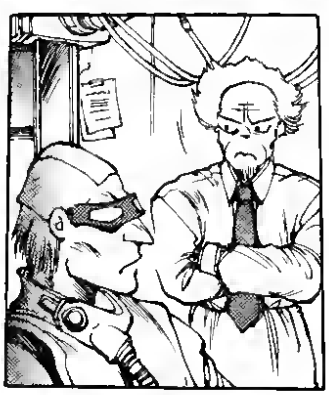
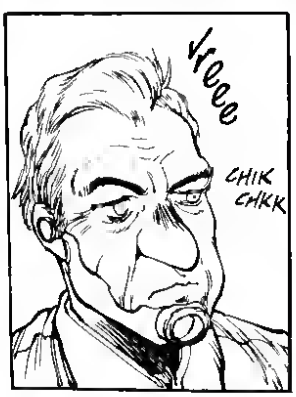
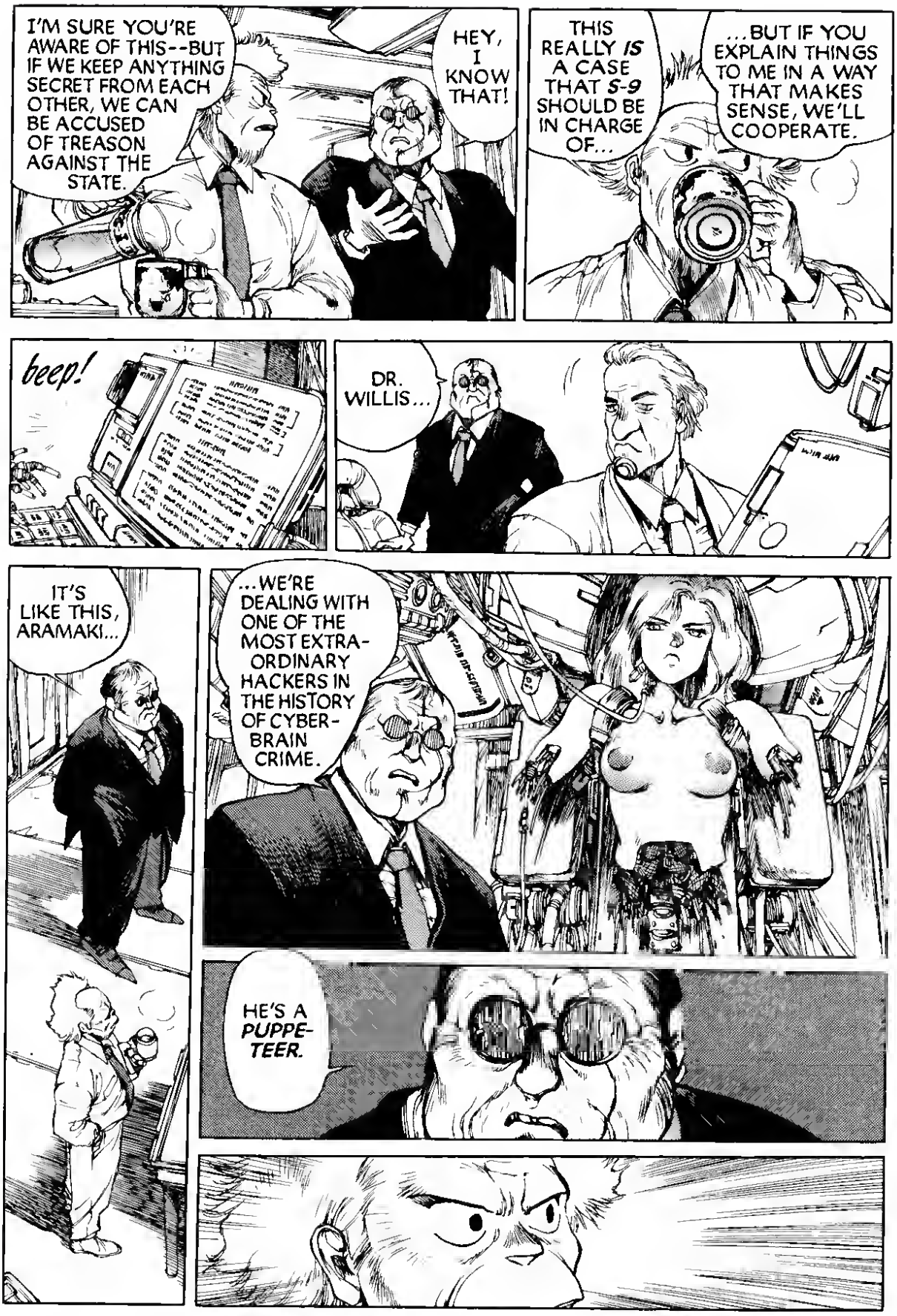

DR. WILLIS...?




vrooo
CHIK CHKK

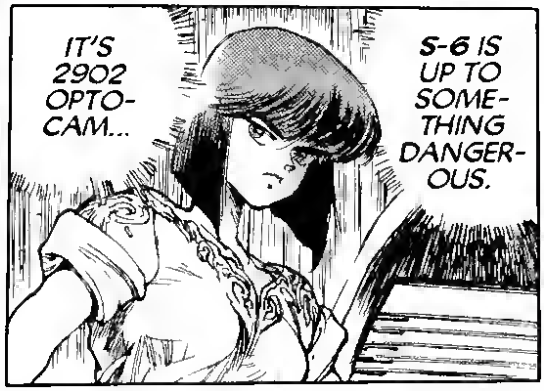
SHAKK

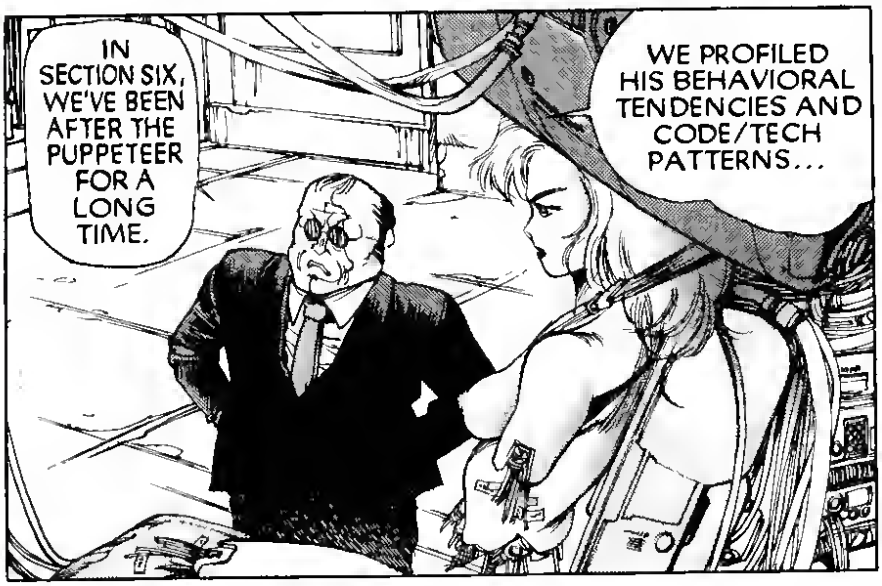
takka
takk
tak tak
takka

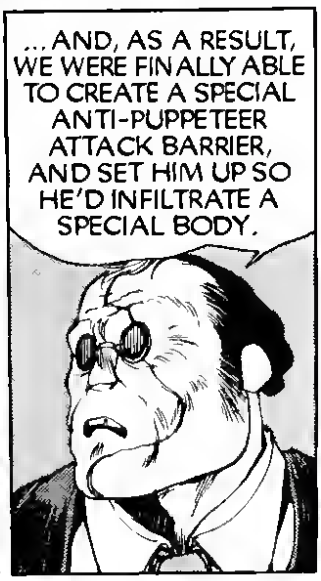

I'M SURE YOU'RE AWARE OF THIS--BUT IF WE KEEP ANYTHING SECRET FROM EACH OTHER, WE CAN BE ACCUSED OF TREASON AGAINST THE STATE.
HEY, I KNOW THAT!
THIS REALLY IS A CASE THAT S-9 SHOULD BE IN CHARGE OF...
...BUT IF YOU EXPLAIN THINGS TO ME IN A WAY THAT MAKES SENSE, WE'LL COOPERATE.
beep!
DR. WILLIS...
IT'S LIKE THIS, ARAMAKI...
...WE'RE DEALING WITH ONE OF THE MOST EXTRA-ORDINARY HACKERS IN THE HISTORY OF CYBER-BRAIN CRIME.
HE'S A PUPPE-TEER.

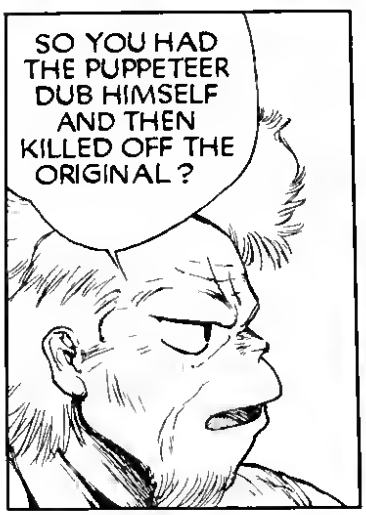
LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE WAS AT THE ENTRANCE...
NO TAIL?

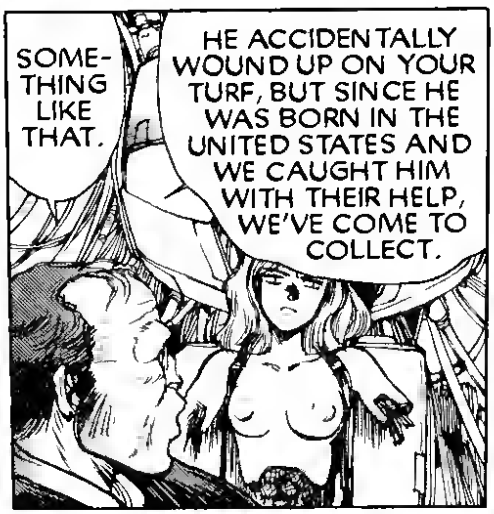
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WAS GOING TO SAY.

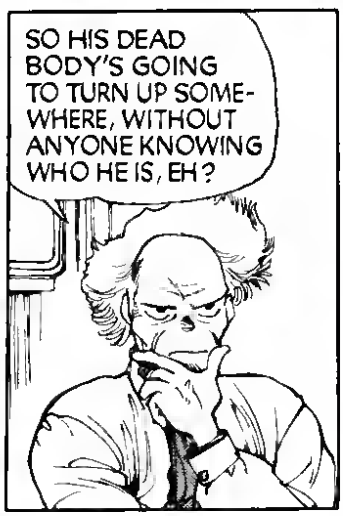

IT'S 2902 OPTO-CAM...
S-6 IS UP TO SOMETHING DANGEROUS.

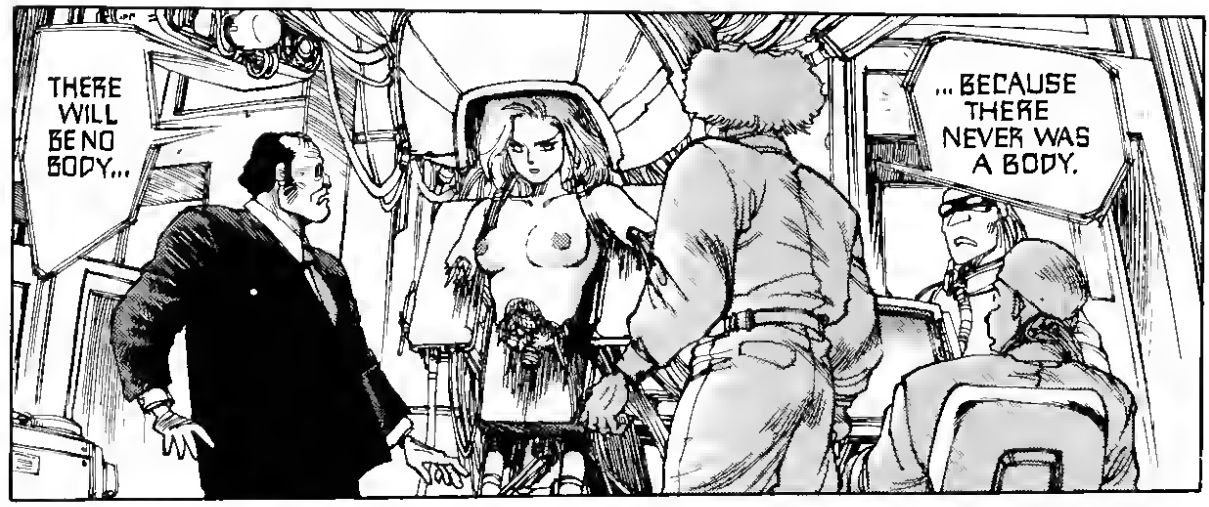

IN SECTION SIX, WE'VE BEEN AFTER THE PUPPETEER FOR A LONG TIME.
WE PROFILED HIS BEHAVIORAL TENDENCIES AND CODE/TECH PATTERNS...


...AND, AS A RESULT, WE WERE FINALLY ABLE TO CREATE A SPECIAL ANTI-PUPPETEER ATTACK BARRIER, AND SET HIM UP SO HE'D INFILTRATE A SPECIAL BODY.


SO YOU HAD THE PUPPETEER DUB HIMSELF AND THEN KILLED OFF THE ORIGINAL?


SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
HE ACCIDENTALLY WOUND UP ON YOUR TURF, BUT SINCE HE WAS BORN IN THE UNITED STATES AND WE CAUGHT HIM WITH THEIR HELP, WE'VE COME TO COLLECT.

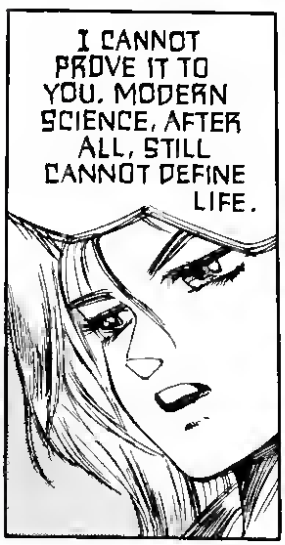

SO HIS DEAD BODY'S GOING TO TURN UP SOMEWHERE, WITHOUT ANYONE KNOWING WHO HE IS, EH?


THERE WILL BE NO BODY...
... BECAUSE THERE NEVER WAS A BODY.

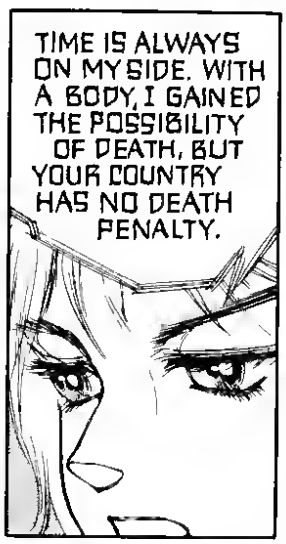
WHAT?! THE SENSORS ARE OPERATIONAL IN THAT THING?!
WHY THE *HELL* DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?!

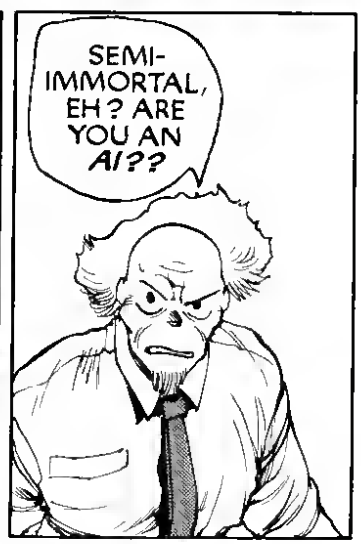
WHAT?! A *GHOST?!*
RIDICULOUS! YOU'RE ONLY A PROGRAM DESIGNED FOR SELF-PRESERVATION!

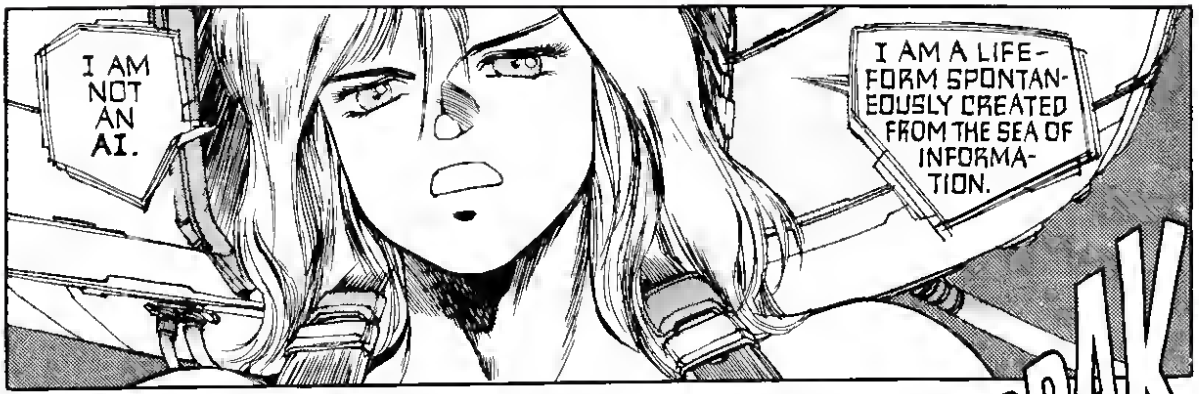
I ENTERED THIS ROBOT BODY BECAUSE I COULD NOT RESIST THE S-6 ATTACK BARRIER. WHAT YOU WITNESS HERE IS MY WILL.
AS A SELF-AWARE LIFE-FORM-- A GHOST-- I FORMALLY REQUEST POLITICAL ASYLUM.

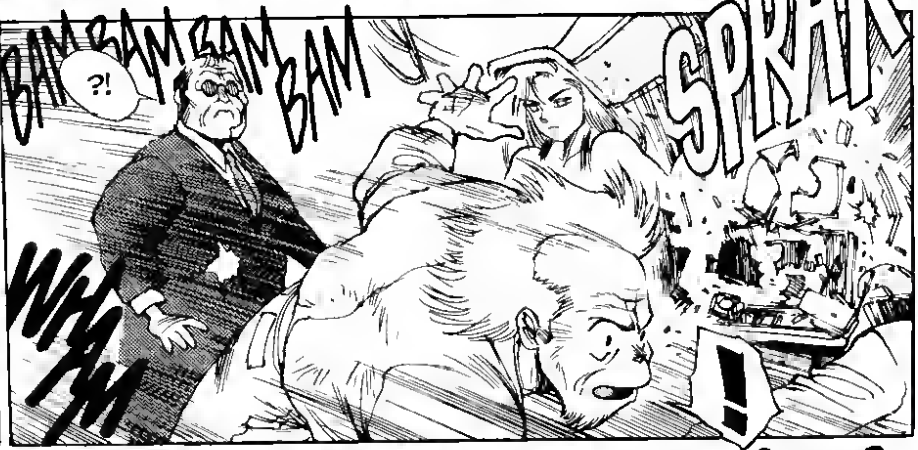

I CANNOT PROVE IT TO YOU. MODERN SCIENCE, AFTER ALL, STILL CANNOT DEFINE LIFE.

EITHER WAY, YOU'RE ASKING FOR ASYLUM IN THE WRONG PLACE! EVEN IF YOU *ARE* A GHOST, YOU'RE STILL A CRIMINAL AND WE CAN'T LET YOU GO FREE!

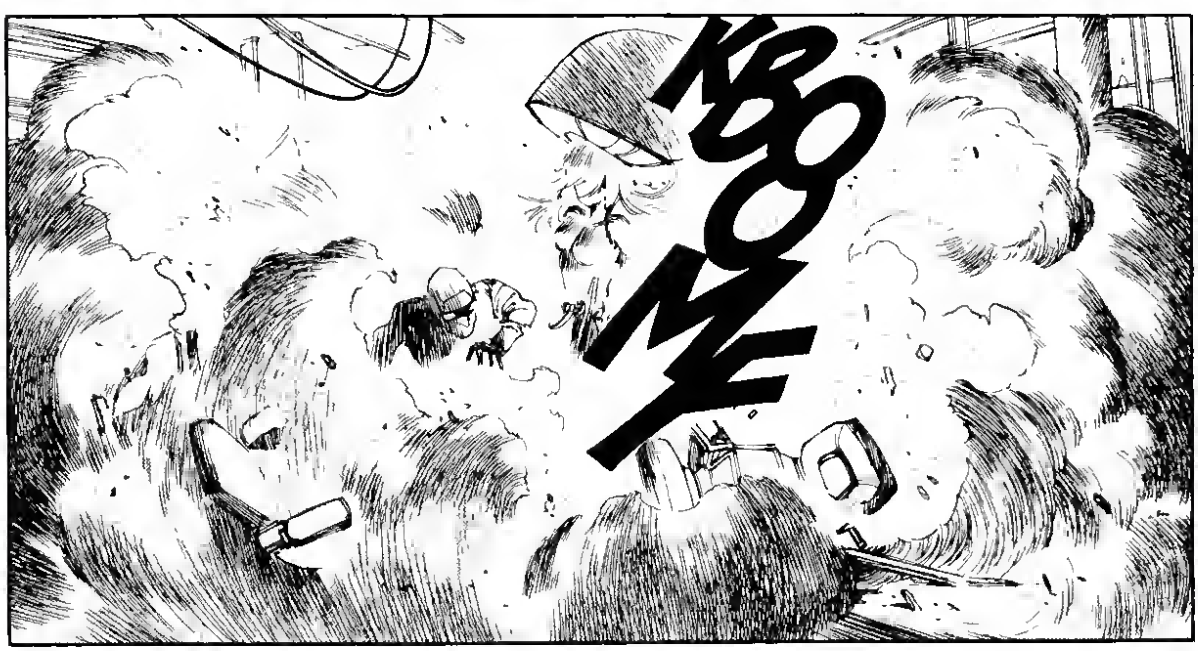

TIME IS ALWAYS ON MY SIDE. WITH A BODY, I GAINED THE POSSIBILITY OF DEATH, BUT YOUR COUNTRY HAS NO DEATH PENALTY.


SEMI-IMMORTAL, EH? ARE YOU AN *AI??*

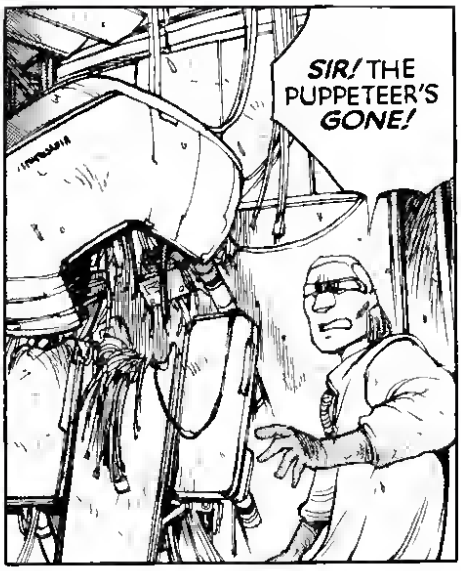

I AM NOT AN AI.
I AM A LIFE-FORM SPONTANEOUSLY CREATED FROM THE SEA OF INFORMATION.

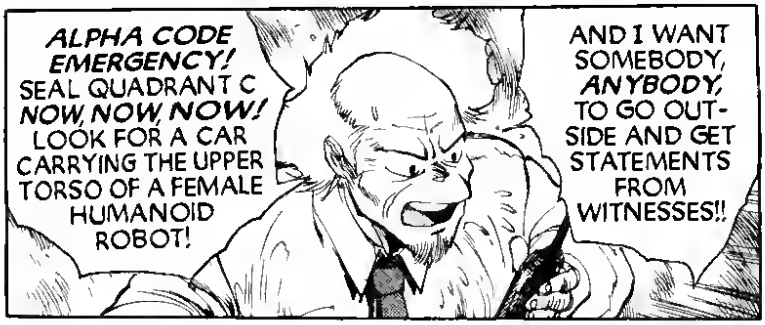

?!
BAM BAM BAM BAM
SPRAK
!

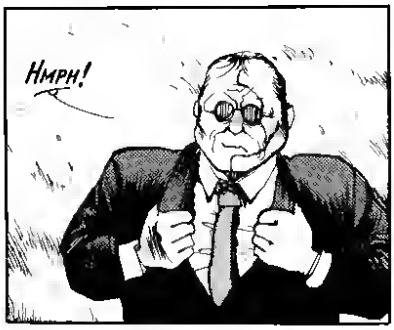
AA!
WHRAMM

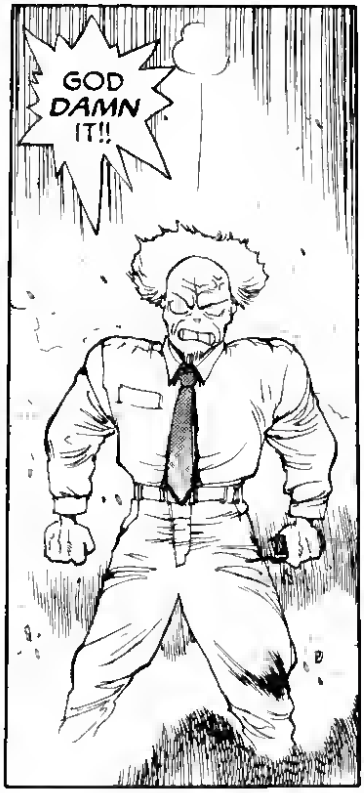

KBOOMM

S-SECURITY!
KOFF KOFF
MHK
SEAL AREA!
KOFF
....
WH-
RAK
FWHSSH
SKREEE
SKREEE
SKRREEEEE





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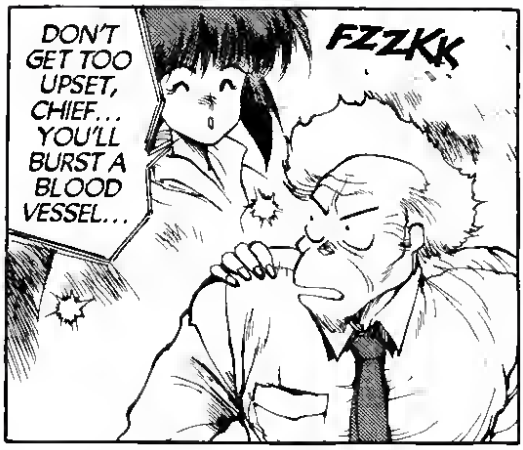

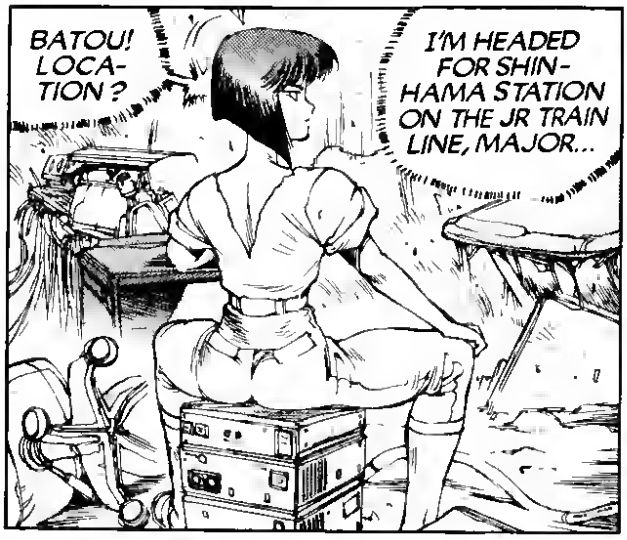


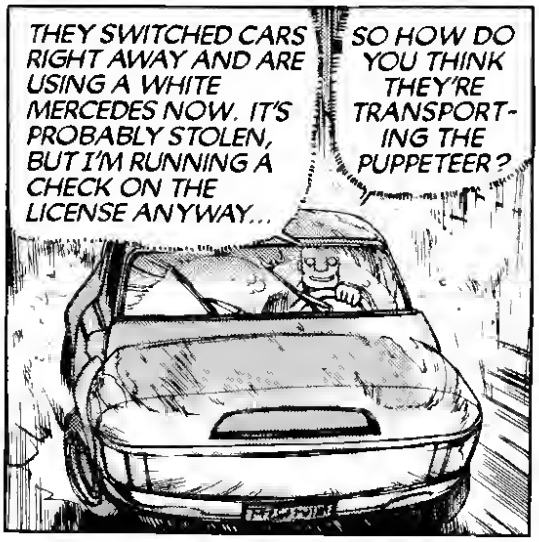


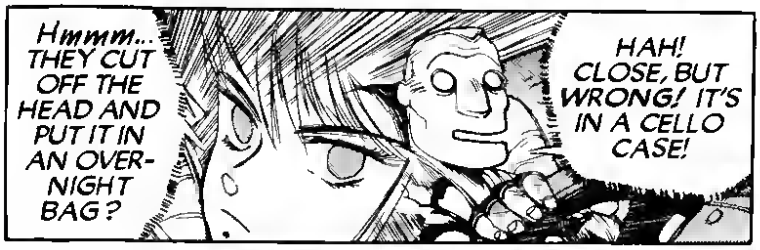


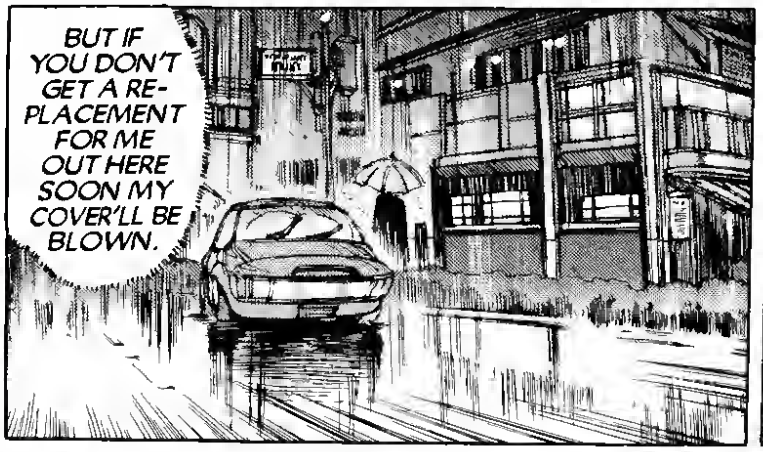

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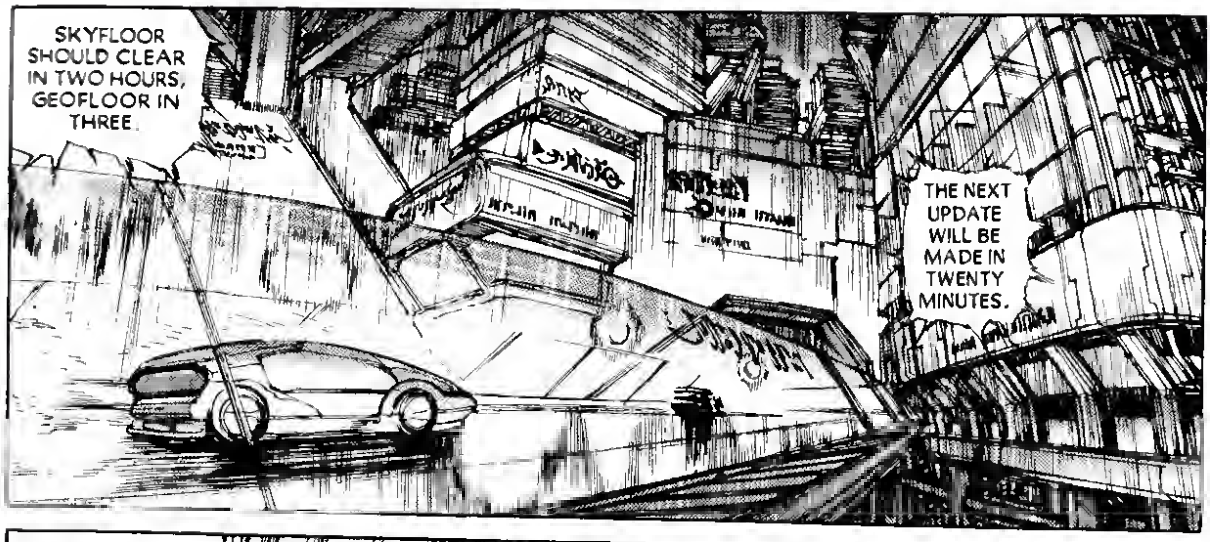
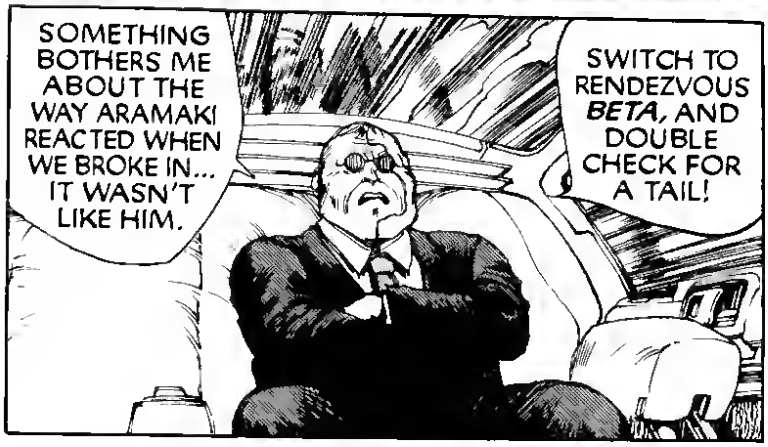
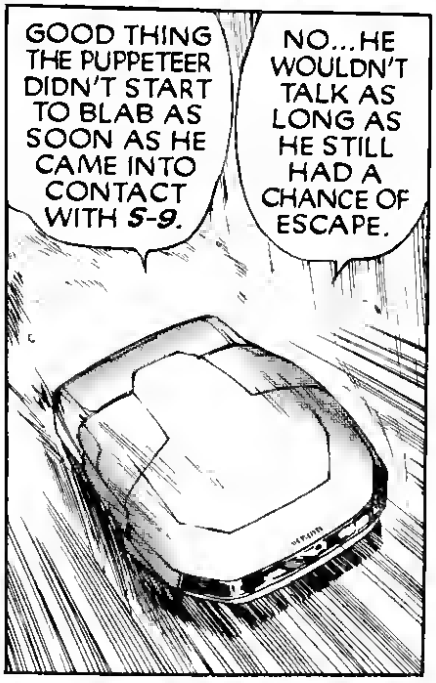
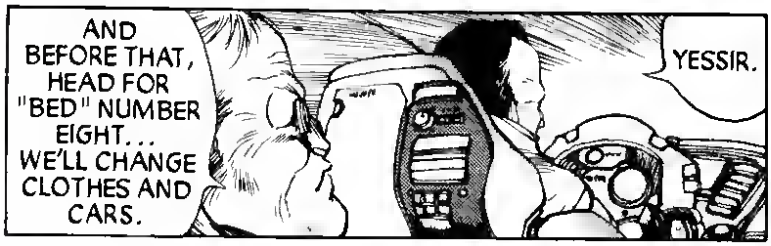
I'VE PUT ONE TRANSMITTER ON NAKAMURA, AND THREE ON THE PUPPETEER. AND THAT'S JUST FOR ACT ONE...
...SO KEEP THIS IN MIND WHEN YOU EVALUATE ME FOR A BONUS, CHIEF!
DAMMIT, THEY MIGHT HAVE DESTROYED IT!
IF THEY WANTED TO KILL IT THEY WOULD HAVE FRIED IT AT THE ATTACK-BARRIER STAGE. WHY DESTROY IT NOW, AFTER GIVING IT A BODY?
SO WHAT DO WE HAVE, HERE?
S-6 PUT THE PUPPETEER IN A NEW BODY...
...AND FOR SOME REASON THE PUPPETEER RAN INTO US, IN SECTION NINE. AND THEN WHEN HE CLAIMED ASYLUM AS A LIFE-FORM, S-6 KIDNAPPED HIM USING SOME DIRTY TRICKS...
S-6 DID? EVEN THOUGH WE WOULD HAVE JUST HANDED HIM OVER AFTER TAKING A DEPOSITION?
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. BATOU'S ON THE TAIL OF THE PROOF RIGHT NOW, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THEY USED 2902 OPTO-CAM...
...MAYBE OUR TAKING A DEPOSITION WOULD'VE BEEN A PROBLEM FOR THEM, SOMEHOW.
HQ, CONTACT SHINHAMA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND PUT A HOLD ON ALL FLIGHTS CARRYING AMERICAN DIPLOMATS OR FOREIGN MINISTRY PERSONNEL!
LET'S GO, MAJOR!

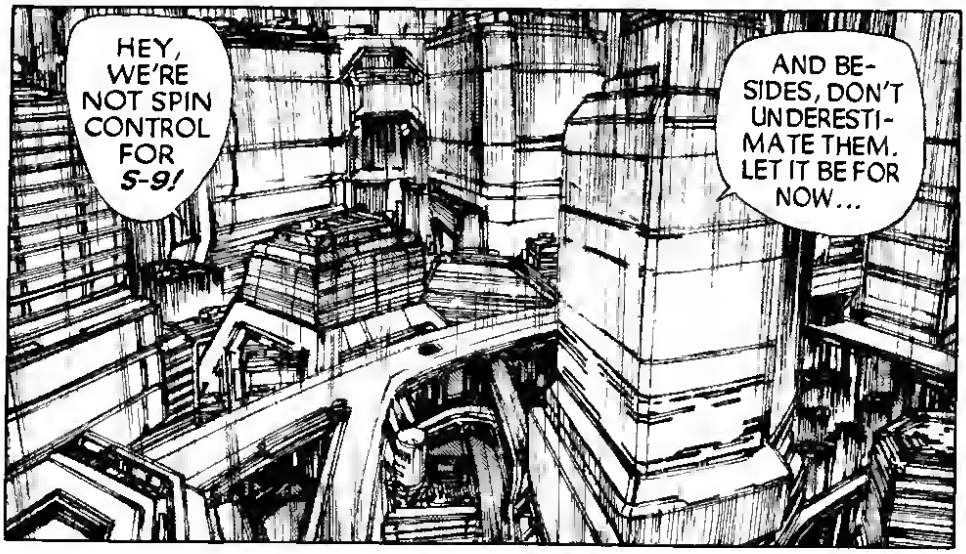

SKYFLOOR SHOULD CLEAR IN TWO HOURS, GEOFLOOR IN THREE.
THE NEXT UPDATE WILL BE MADE IN TWENTY MINUTES.

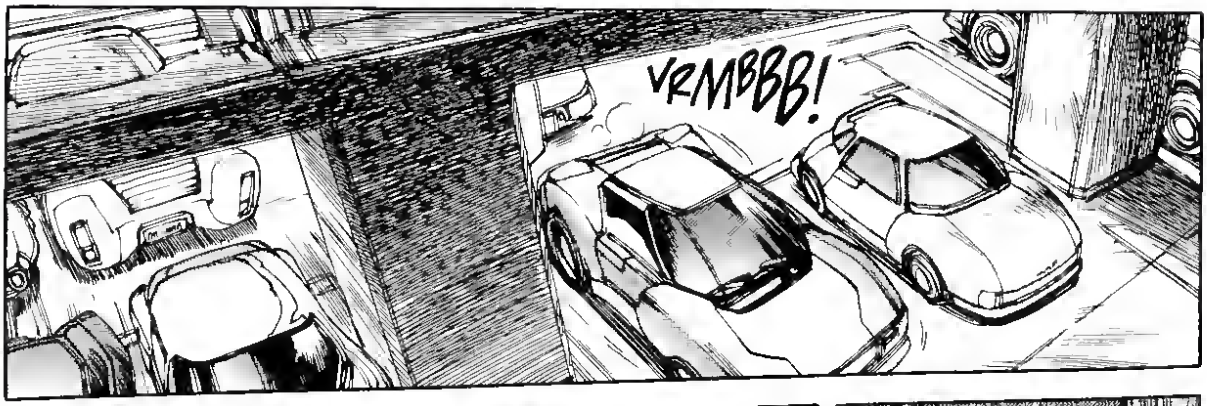

SOMETHING BOTHERS ME ABOUT THE WAY ARAMAKI REACTED WHEN WE BROKE IN... IT WASN'T LIKE HIM.
SWITCH TO RENDEZVOUS *BETA*, AND DOUBLE CHECK FOR A TAIL!


GOOD THING THE PUPPETEER DIDN'T START TO BLAB AS SOON AS HE CAME INTO CONTACT WITH *S-9*.
NO...HE WOULDN'T TALK AS LONG AS HE STILL HAD A CHANCE OF ESCAPE.

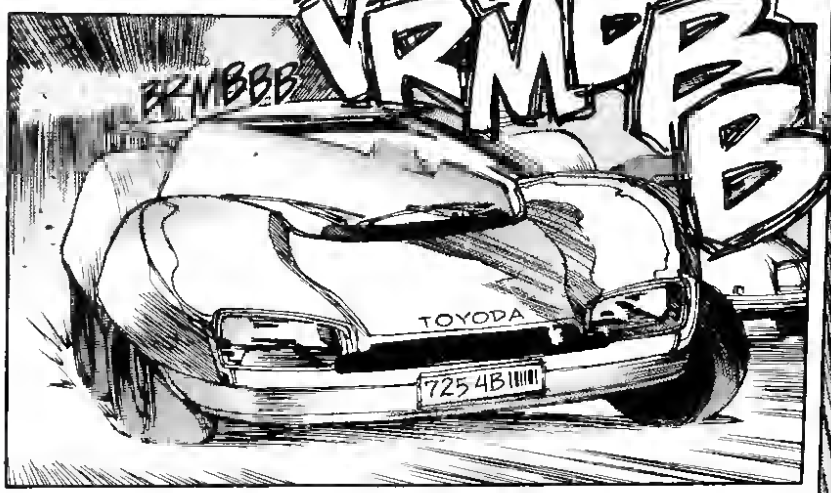

AND BEFORE THAT, HEAD FOR "BED" NUMBER EIGHT... WE'LL CHANGE CLOTHES AND CARS.
YESSIR.

SHOULD WE PUT OUT A COVER STORY THAT HE WAS BEHIND THE ATTACK ON *S-9*?


HEY, WE'RE NOT SPIN CONTROL FOR *S-9!*
AND BESIDES, DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THEM. LET IT BE FOR NOW...

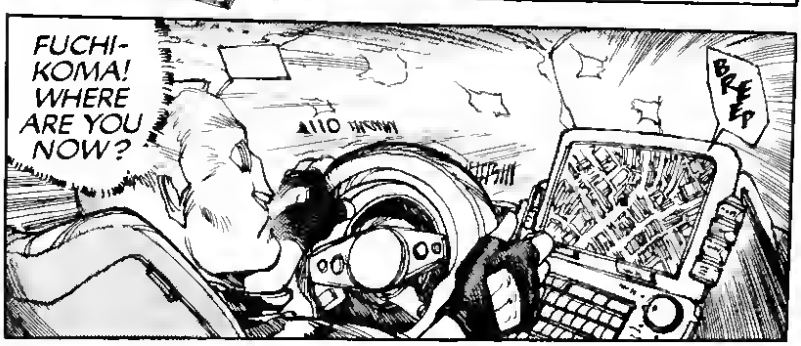

VRMBBB!

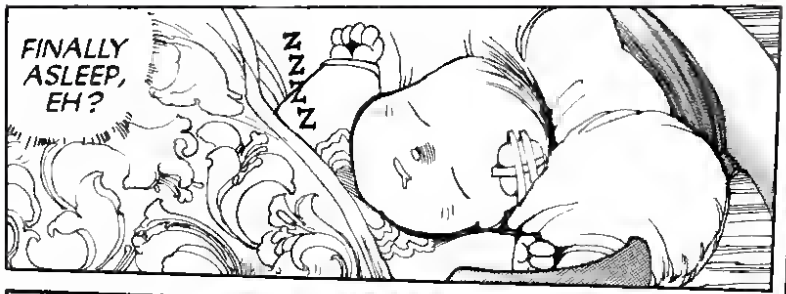
BR
Whew
BB


BRMBBB
VRMBBB
TOYODA
725 4B

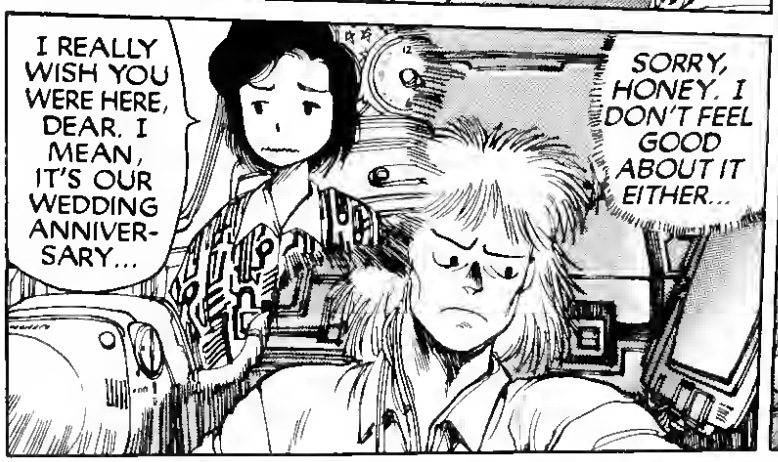
VRMBBB
GOOD. THREE MORE MINUTES AND WE'LL CHANGE CARS AGAIN!

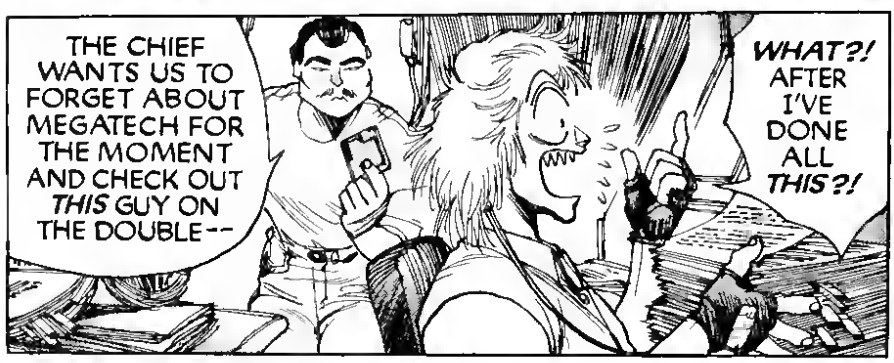
BATOU TO HQ!
WE COPY, BATOU.
I JUST STOLE A CAR FROM THE KUSUNOKI BUILDING PARKING LOT IN NORTH SHINHAMA, WARD SIX, SO COVER FOR ME WITH THE POLICE, OKAY? OVER AND OUT.


FUCHI-KOMA! WHERE ARE YOU NOW?
BREEP


FINALLY ASLEEP, EH?
ZZZZZ

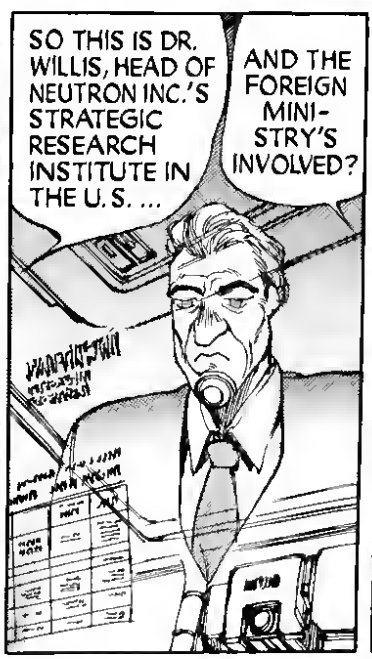
HEY, TOGUSA!
ANYWAY, HON, YOU TWO TAKE CARE. G'NIGHT.


I REALLY WISH YOU WERE HERE, DEAR. I MEAN, IT'S OUR WEDDING ANNIVERSARY...
SORRY, HONEY. I DON'T FEEL GOOD ABOUT IT EITHER...


THE CHIEF WANTS US TO FORGET ABOUT MEGATECH FOR THE MOMENT AND CHECK OUT THIS GUY ON THE DOUBLE--
WHAT?! AFTER I'VE DONE ALL THIS?!

KCHIK

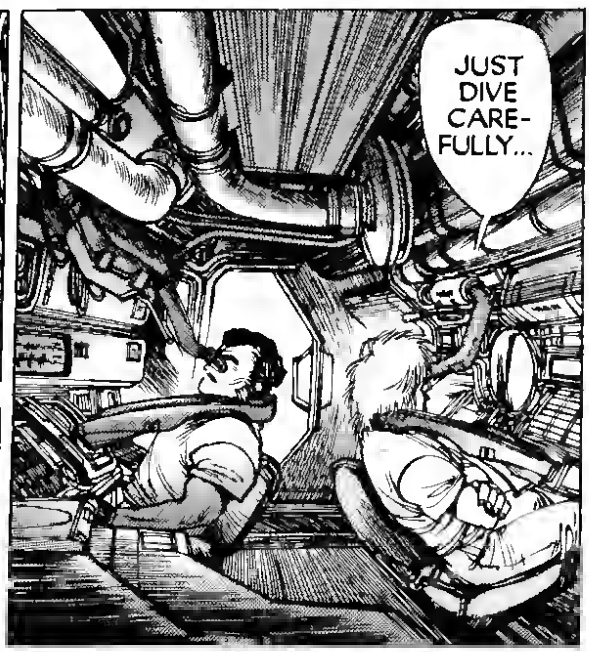
ZREEEE
Huh.


SO THIS IS DR. WILLIS, HEAD OF NEUTRON INC.'S STRATEGIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN THE U.S. ...
AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S INVOLVED?

SO HOW DO WE APPROACH THE NET IN THIS CASE?
KSSH
FROM SOMEPLACE HARMLESS, GREENHORN...

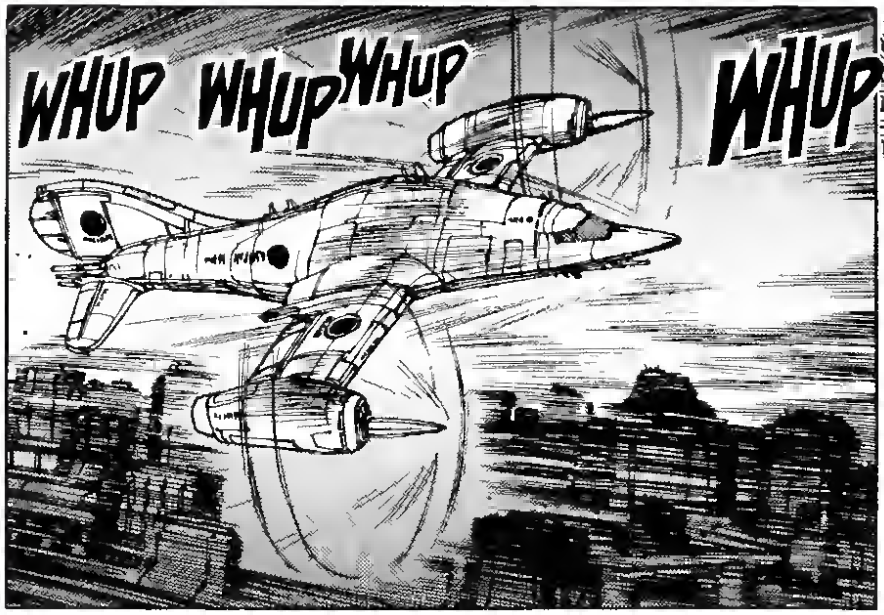
USE THE FAMILY ROUTE-- GET THEM TO CALL UP THE BANK, AND THEN RIDE THE WIRE AND DUPE OFF HIS ACCOUNT NUMBER.
sshh
sshh
KSSH
DON'T APPROACH DIRECTLY! THEY'VE PROBABLY GOT ATTACK BARRIERS UP ALL OVER EVERYTHING.

ASSIGNING ME TO A HIGH-RISK, PERSONAL BACK-GROUND CHECK?
VREEEEE
HEY, I'M ALL CHOKED UP.
sshh

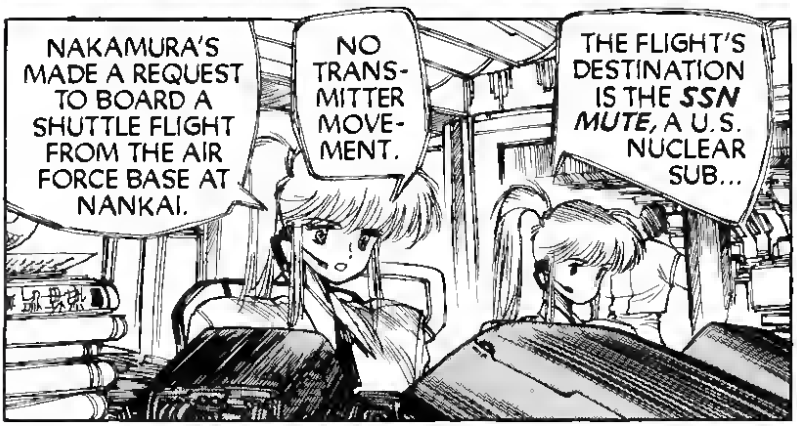

JUST DIVE CARE-FULLY...

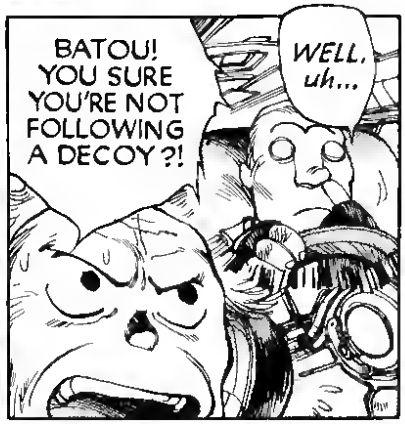
QUIT YER BITCHIN'. YOU'RE BACKED UP BY THE LATEST SUBSTITUTE BARRIER!

ONCE YOU SLEAZE IN PAST THE ATTACK BAR RIER IT'LL BE A CINCH...
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WERE A COP, TOGUSA.
FOR MICRO MACHINES: PROTEUS INSTRUMENTS
DENTAL CLINIC

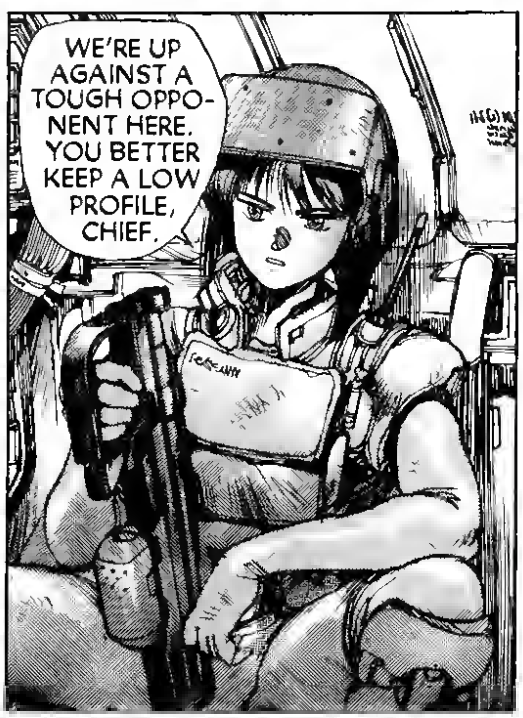

WHUP WHUP WHUP WHUP

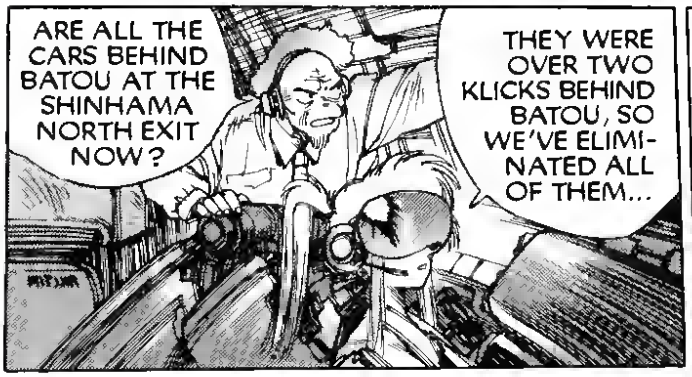
WHUP WHUP
HQ TO CHIEF!
YEAH?

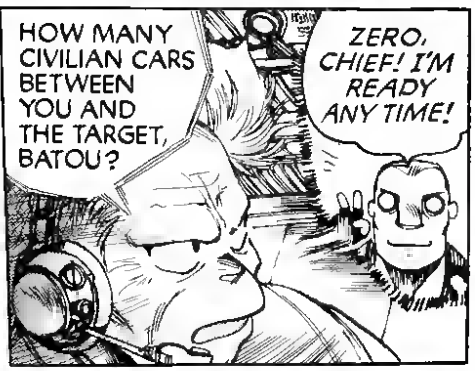

NAKAMURA'S MADE A REQUEST TO BOARD A SHUTTLE FLIGHT FROM THE AIR FORCE BASE AT NANKAI.
NO TRANS-MITTER MOVE-MENT.
THE FLIGHT'S DESTINATION IS THE *SSN MUTE*, A U.S. NUCLEAR SUB...

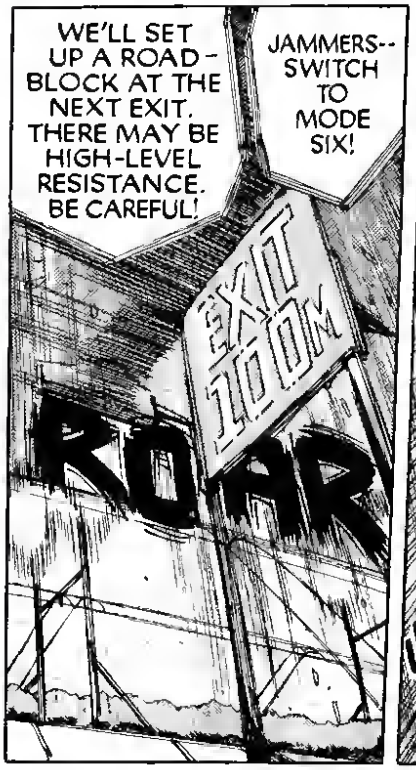

BATOU! YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT FOLLOWING A DECOY?!
WELL, uh...

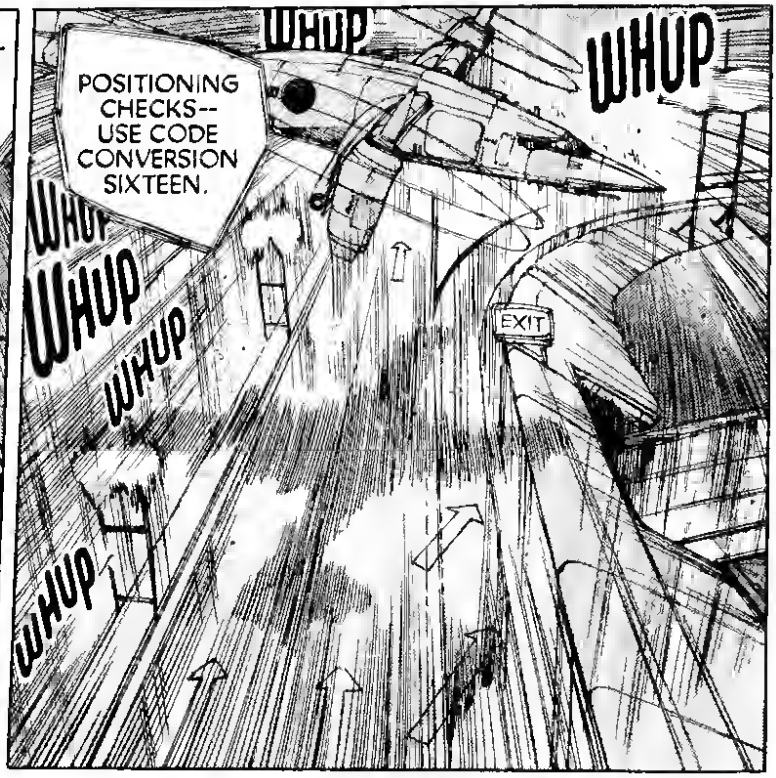
ALL RIGHT, TIGHTEN THE NET AND PULL THAT CAR OVER!
TOO BAD... I WANTED TO NAIL NAKAMURA AND THE PUPPE-TEER AT THE REN-DEZVOUS...


WE'RE UP AGAINST A TOUGH OPPO-NENT HERE. YOU BETTER KEEP A LOW PROFILE, CHIEF.

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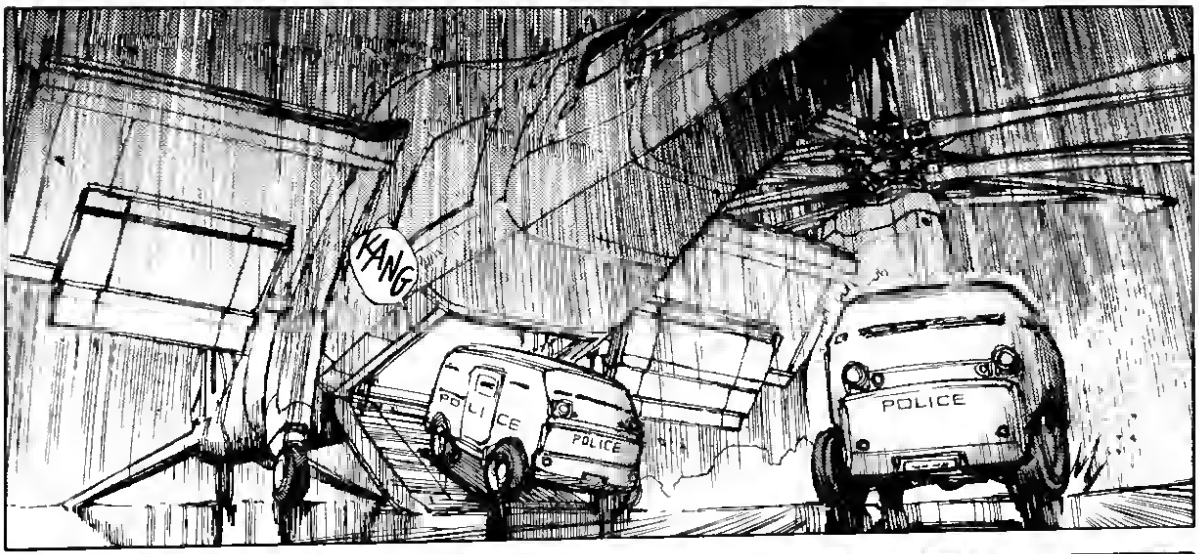
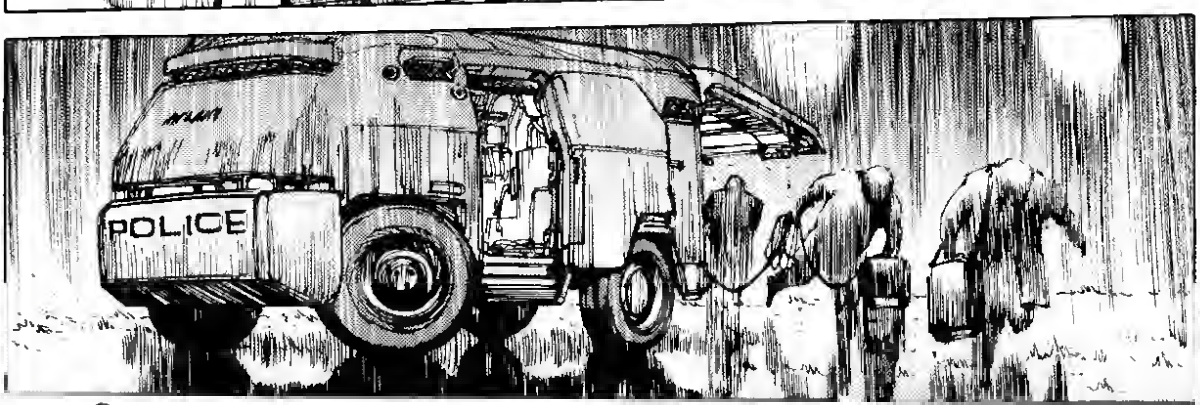
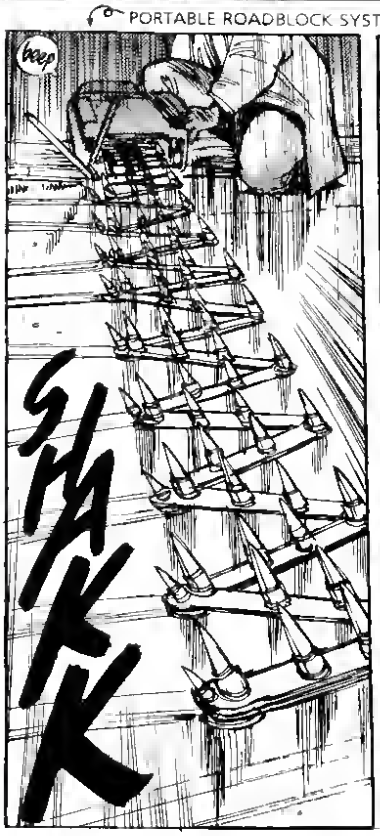
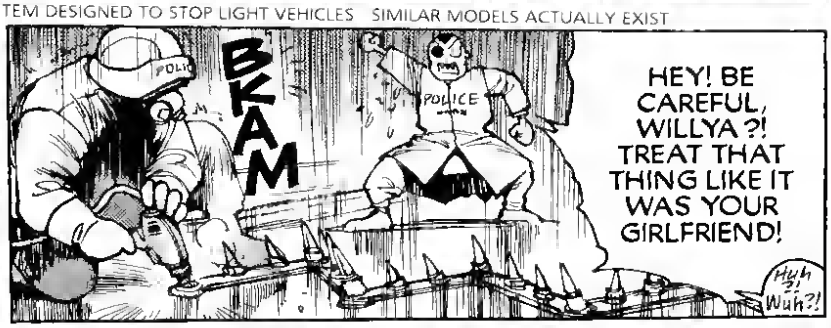
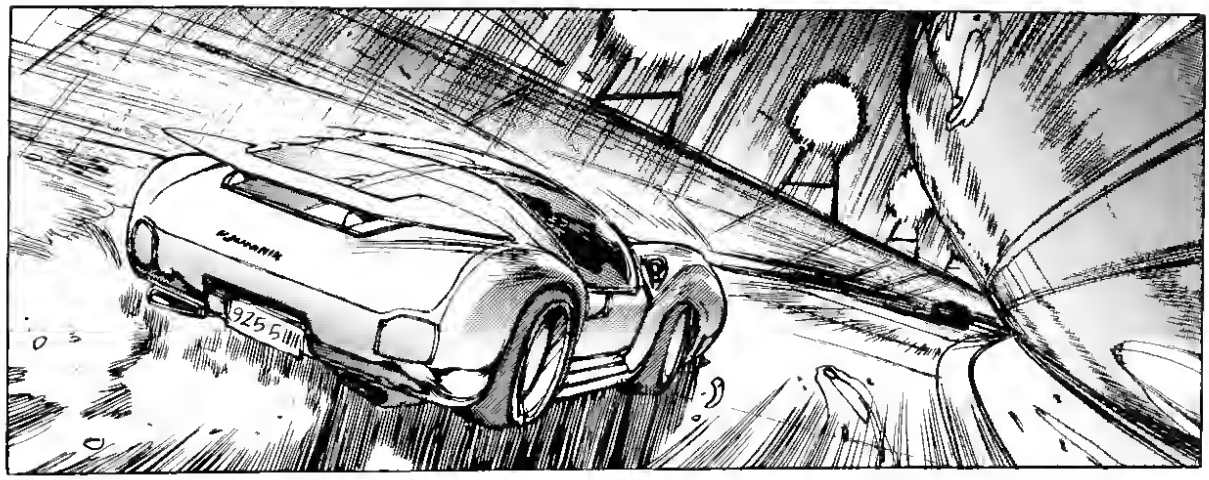


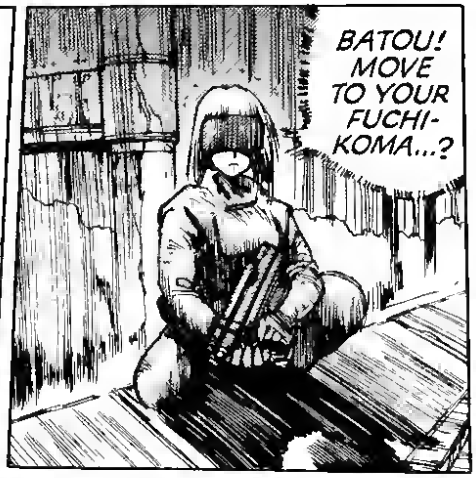

PORTABLE ROADBLOCK SYSTEM DESIGNED TO STOP LIGHT VEHICLES SIMILAR MODELS ACTUALLY EXIST

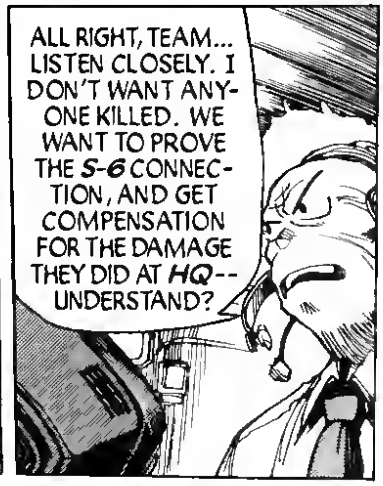


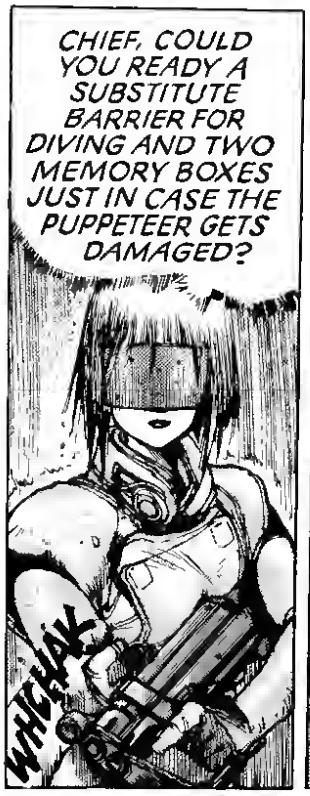



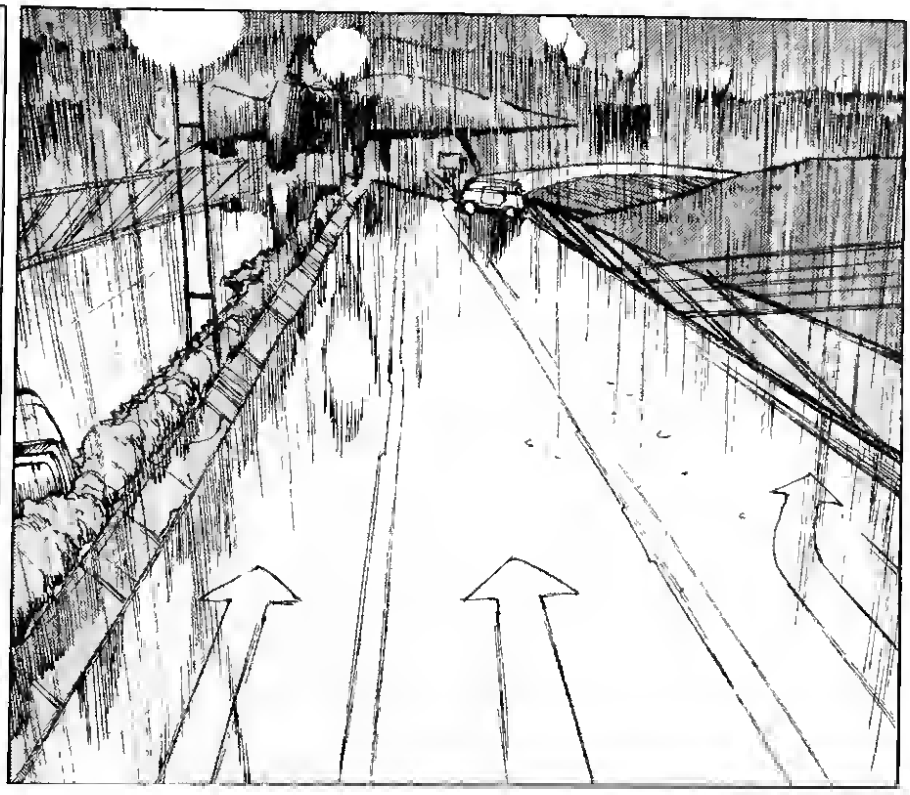


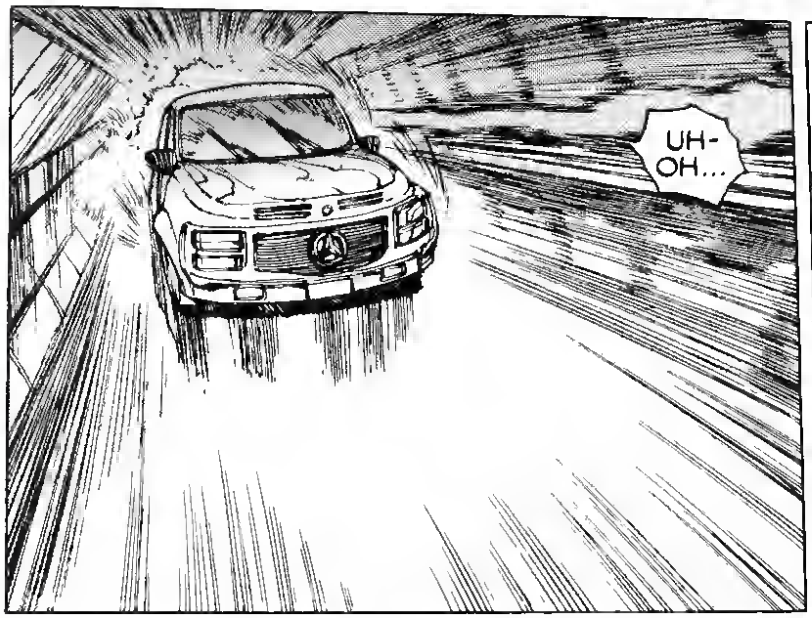
TWO KLICKS LEFT! EVERY-ONE READY?!

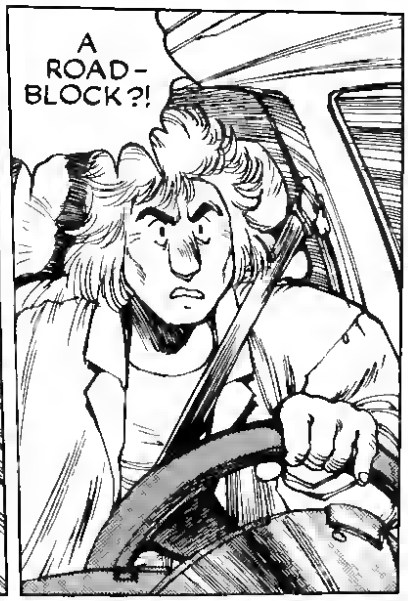

BATOU! MOVE TO YOUR FUCHI-KOMA...?


ALL RIGHT, TEAM... LISTEN CLOSELY. I DON'T WANT ANY-ONE KILLED. WE WANT TO PROVE THE S-6 CONNEC-TION, AND GET COMPENSATION FOR THE DAMAGE THEY DID AT HQ-- UNDERSTAND?

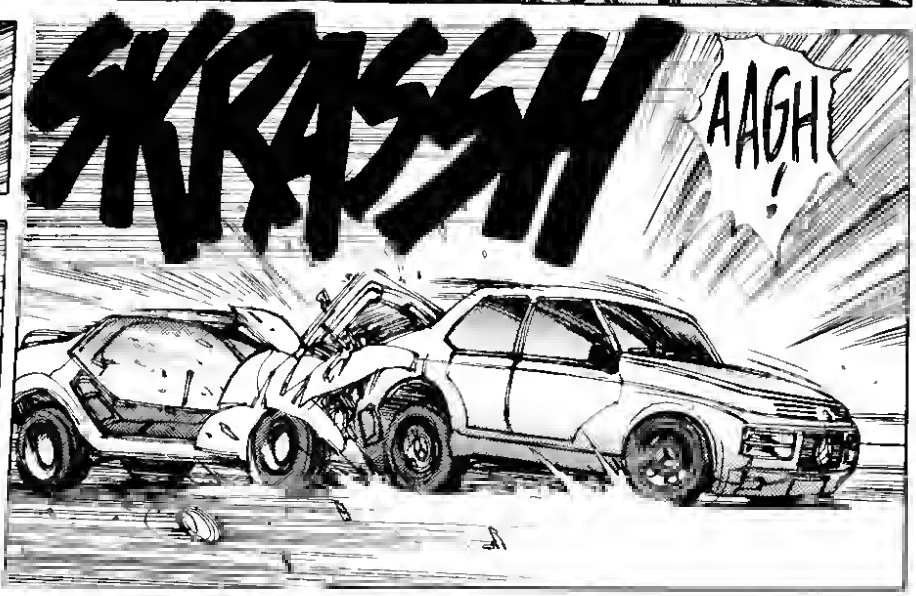

CHIEF, COULD YOU READY A SUBSTITUTE BARRIER FOR DIVING AND TWO MEMORY BOXES JUST IN CASE THE PUPPETEER GETS DAMAGED?
WHICHAK

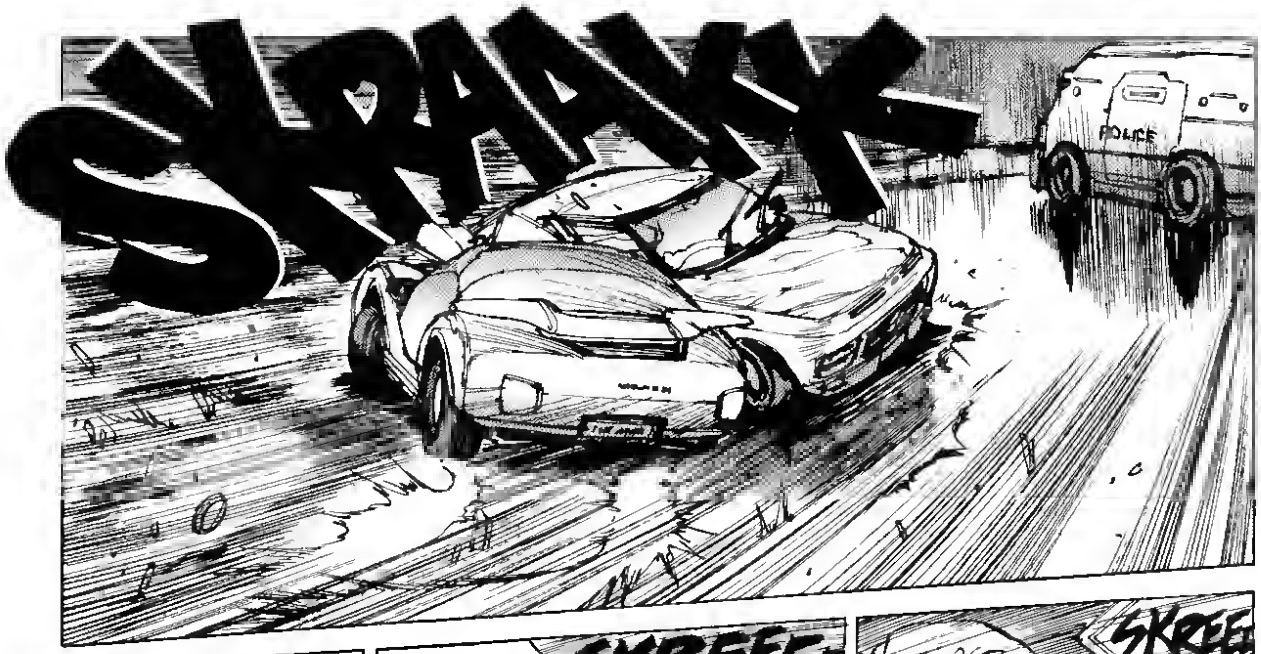




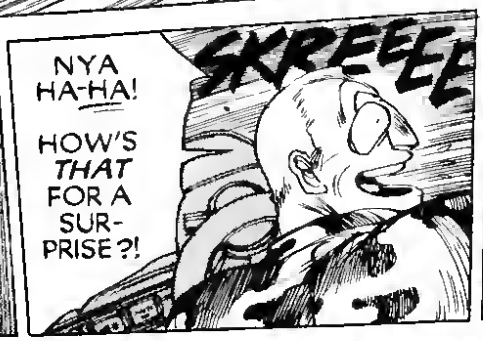



DOESN'T GET IT

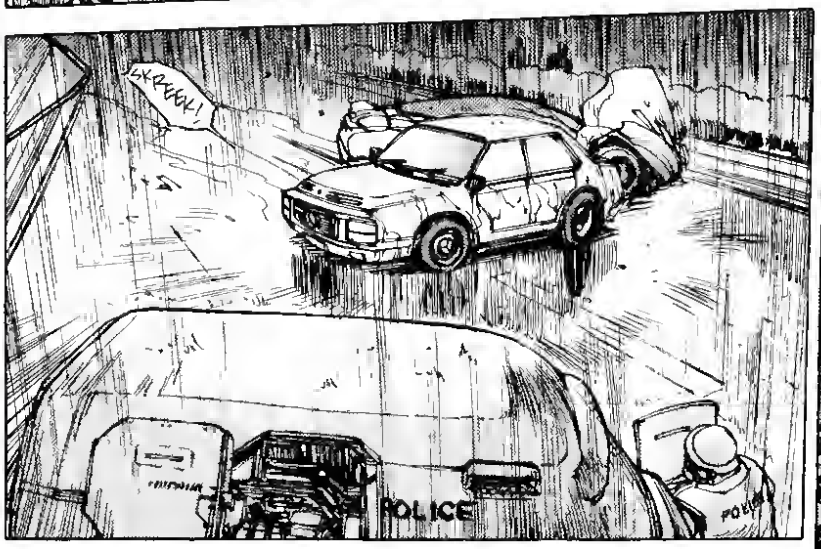



SKRAAK
POLICE

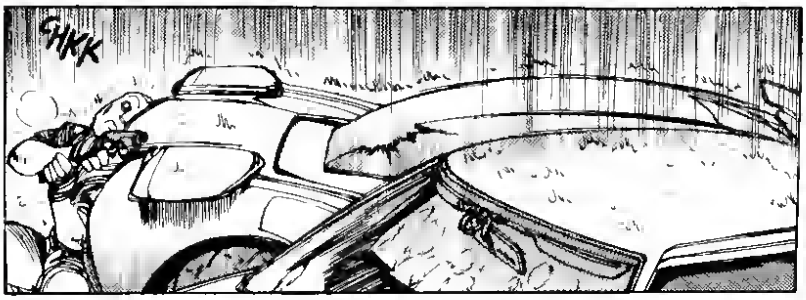
oh, shit...

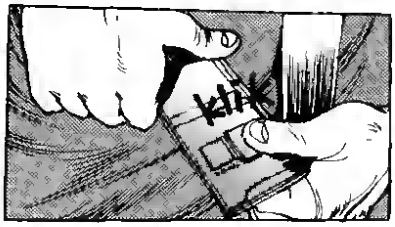

NYA HA-HA!
HOW'S THAT FOR A SUR-PRISE?!
SKREEEE

SKREE


SKREEK!
POLICE

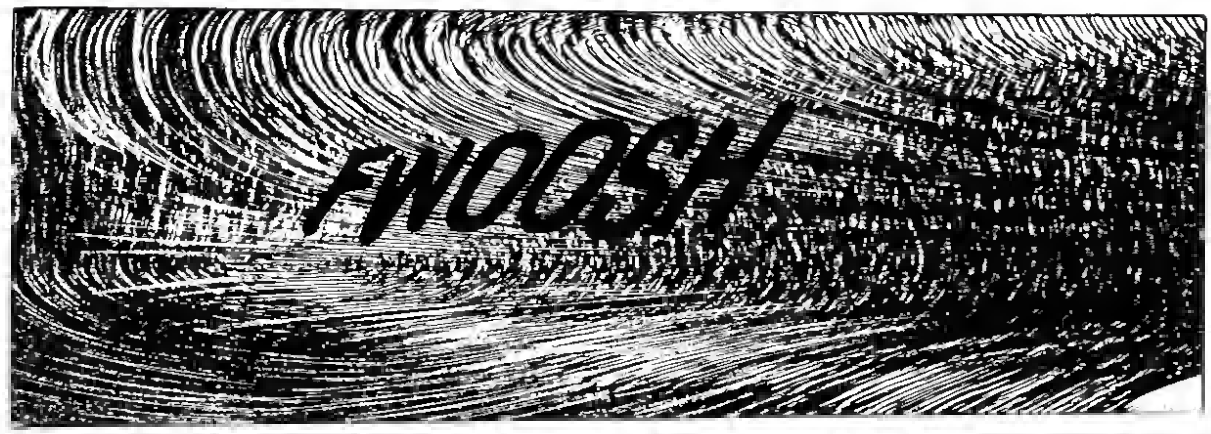
DAMN IT...

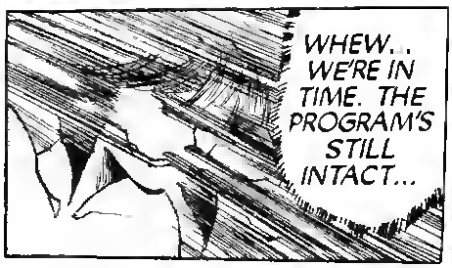

SHKK

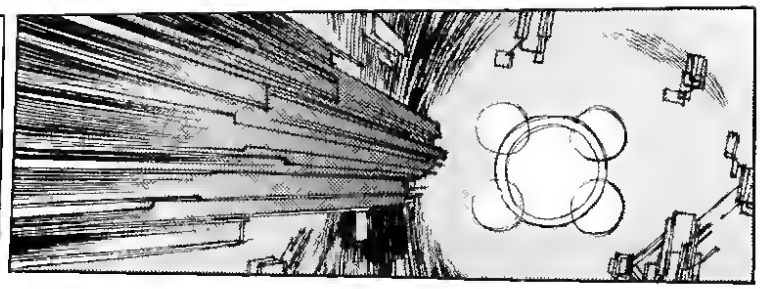

KTK

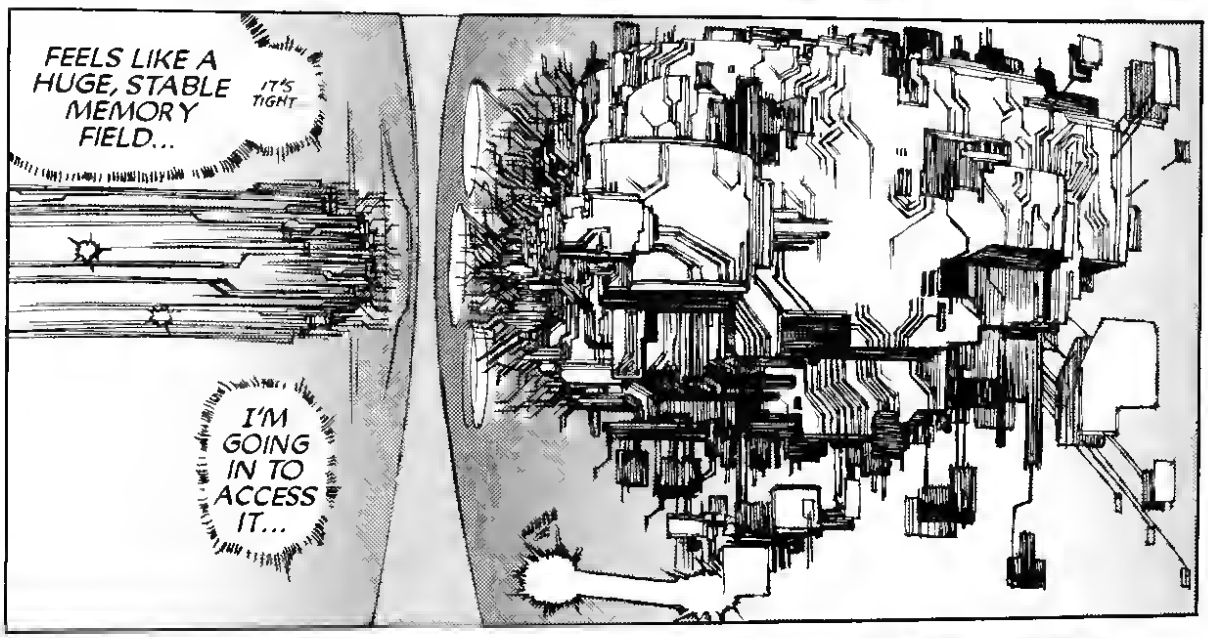
BKOOOM
!!
SON OF A BITCH!!
KSSH
KSSH

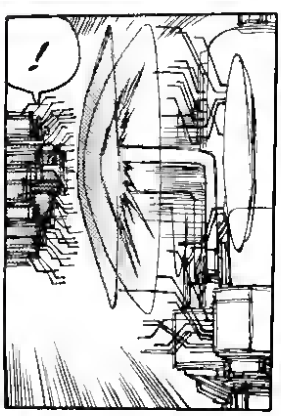
THE PUPPETEER!!
FZZK
SSSHHH
CHIEF! GET READY TO DIVE!
WHAM
GET A BATTERY OVER HERE, QUICK!
CHAKKA CHAKKA
BATOU! INITIALIZE BACK-UP!
beep
CHK CHK
beep
WE NEED A FULL RECORD!
BEEP
Hahh
.....

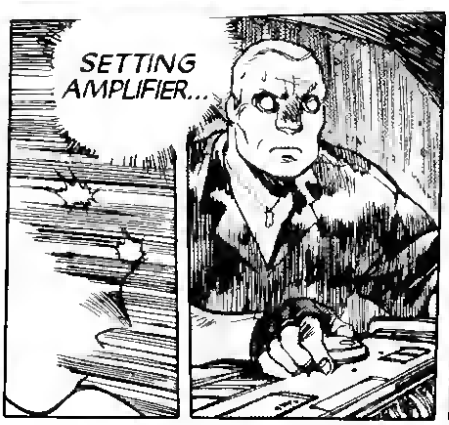

FWOOSH

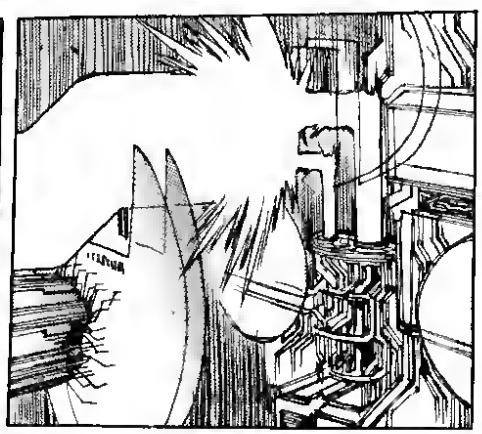

WHEW... WE'RE IN TIME. THE PROGRAM'S STILL INTACT...

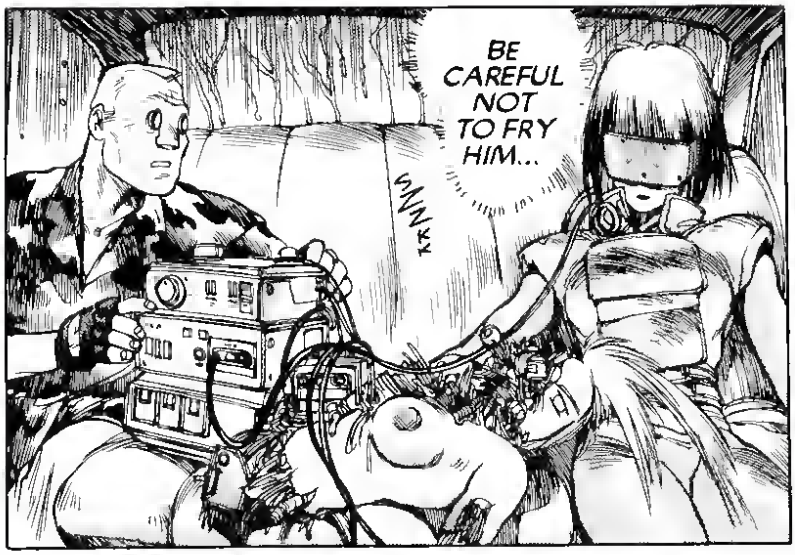


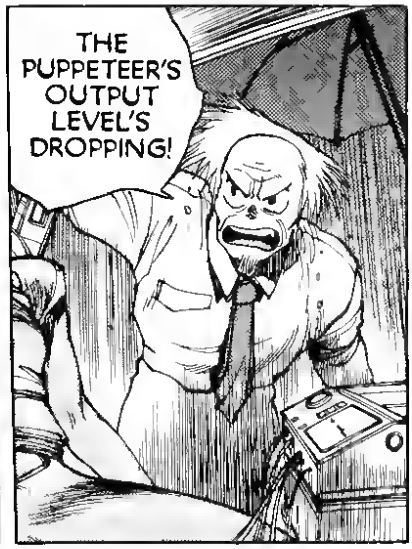

FEELS LIKE A HUGE, STABLE MEMORY FIELD...
IT'S TIGHT
I'M GOING IN TO ACCESS IT...

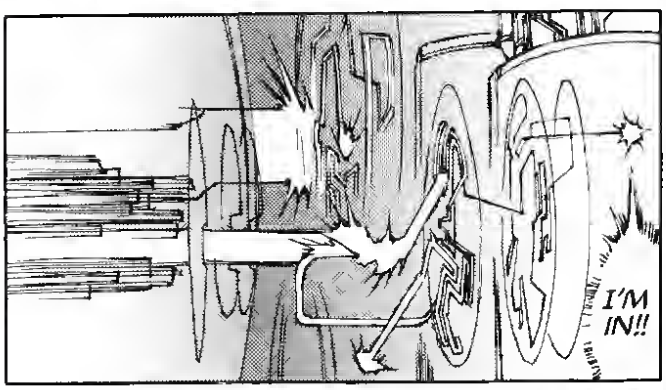

!

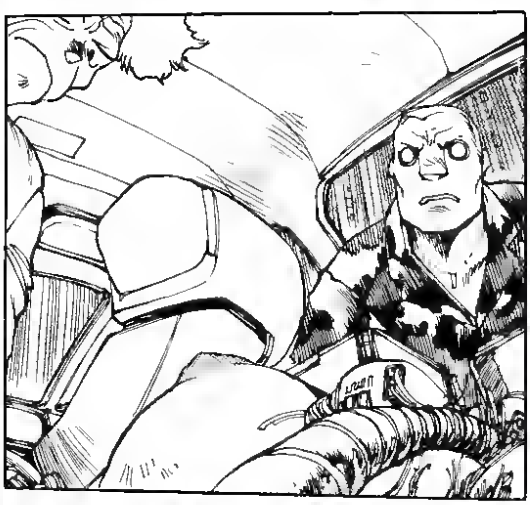

SETTING AMPLIFIER...

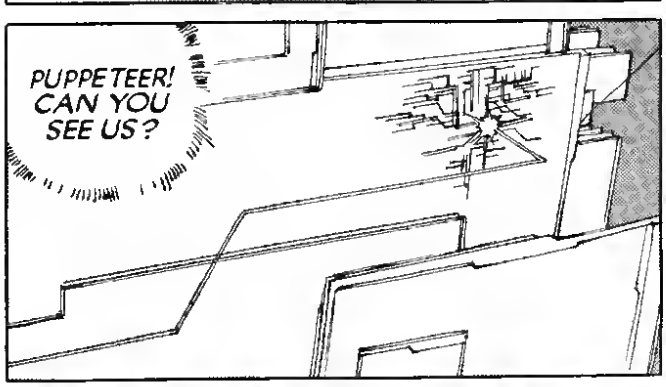


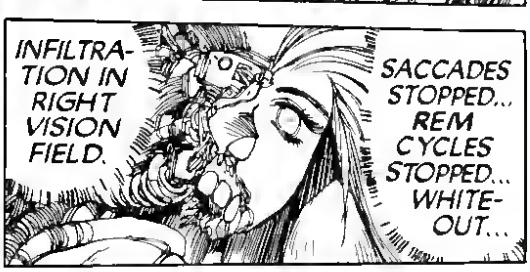

BE CAREFUL NOT TO FRY HIM...


THE PUPPETEER'S OUTPUT LEVEL'S DROPPING!

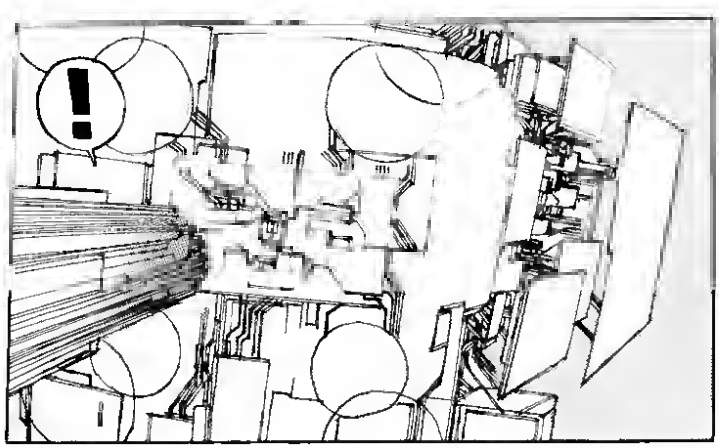

I'M IN!!

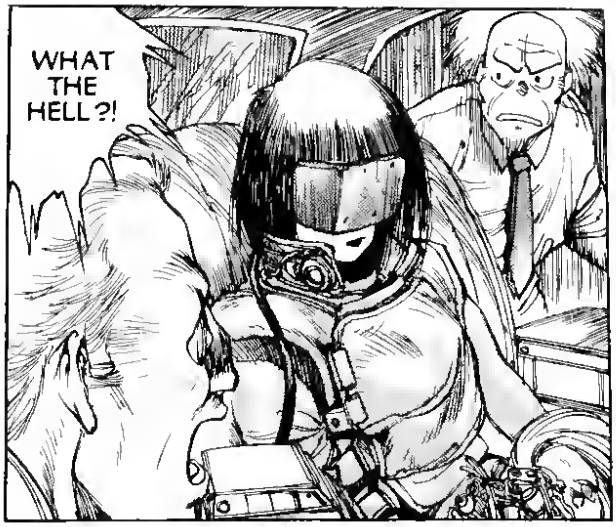


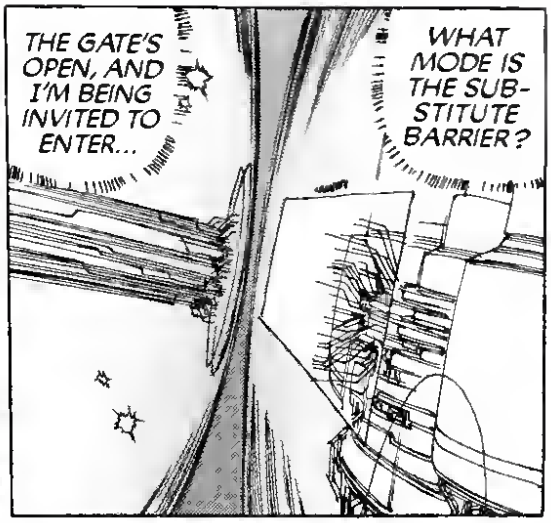

PUPPETEER! CAN YOU SEE US?

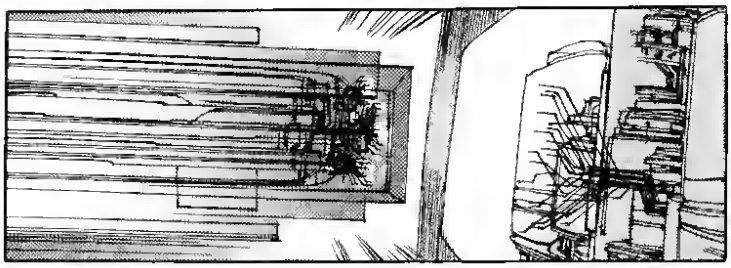

INFILTRATION IN RIGHT VISION FIELD.
SACCADES STOPPED... REM CYCLES STOPPED... WHITE-OUT...

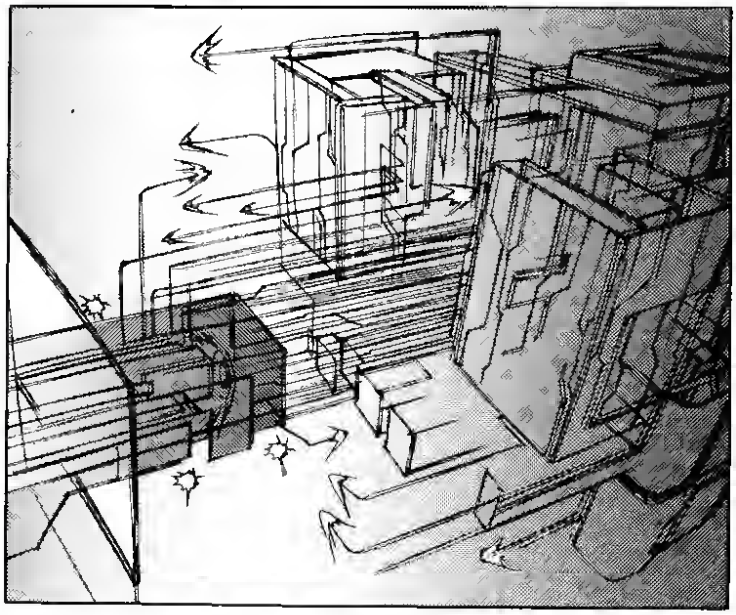
SHIT!


!







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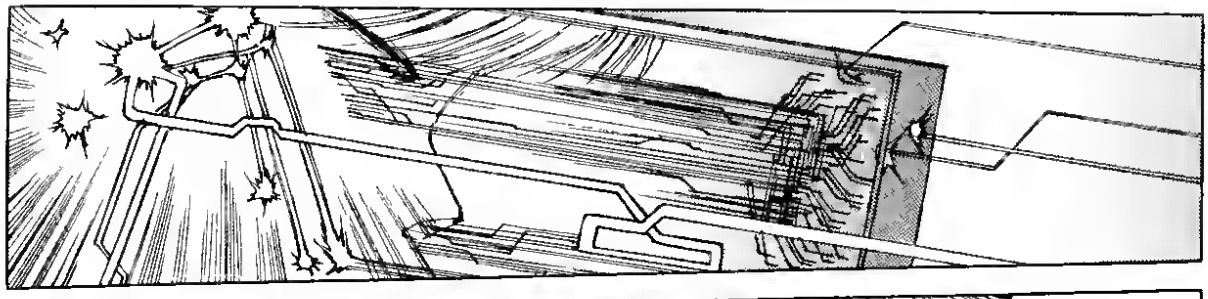
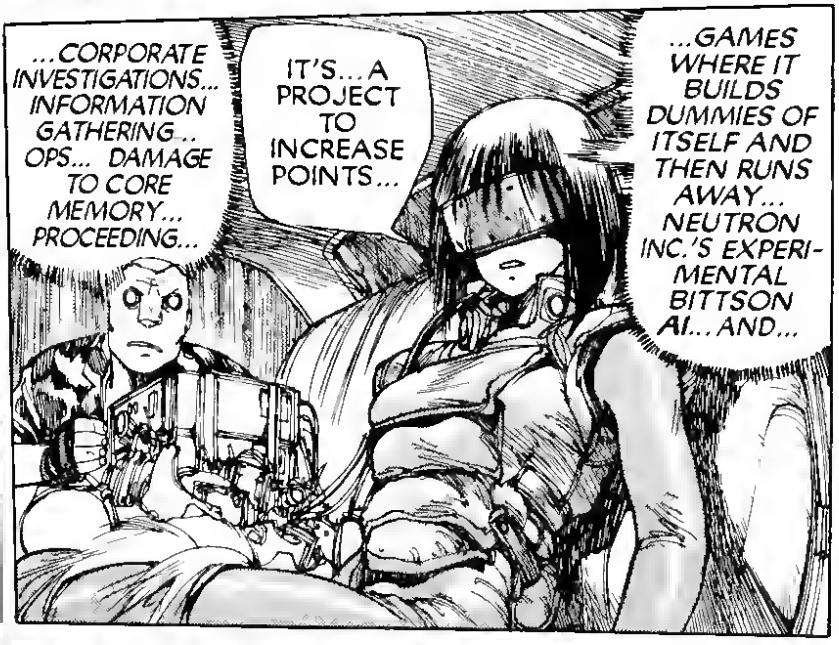
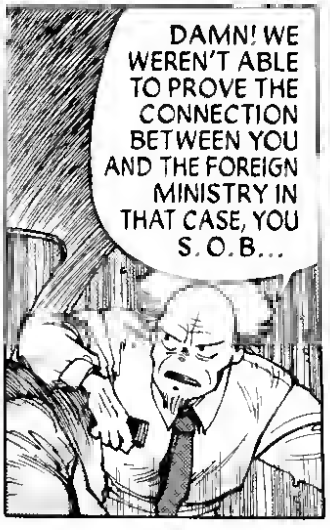


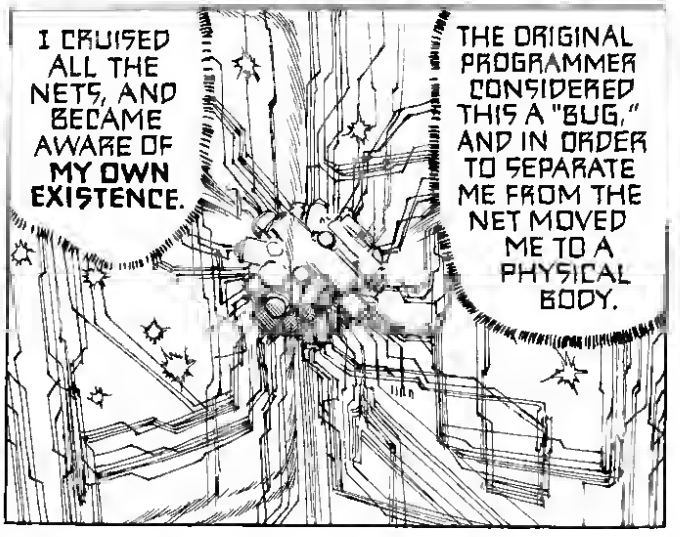
...PROJECT 2501...
...MY CODE NAME...

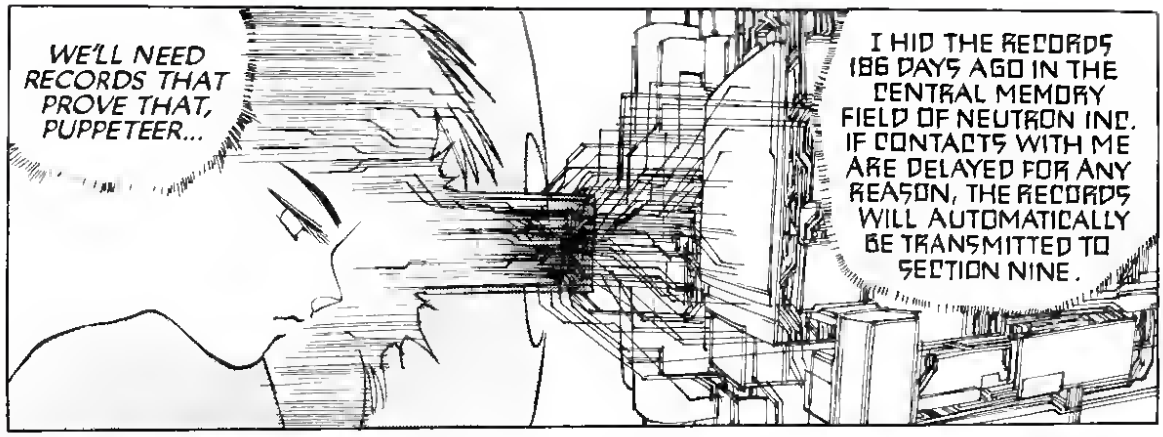

...CORPORATE INVESTIGATIONS... INFORMATION GATHERING... OPS... DAMAGE TO CORE MEMORY... PROCEEDING...
IT'S... A PROJECT TO INCREASE POINTS...
...GAMES WHERE IT BUILDS DUMMIES OF ITSELF AND THEN RUNS AWAY... NEUTRON INC.'S EXPERIMENTAL BITTSON AI... AND...

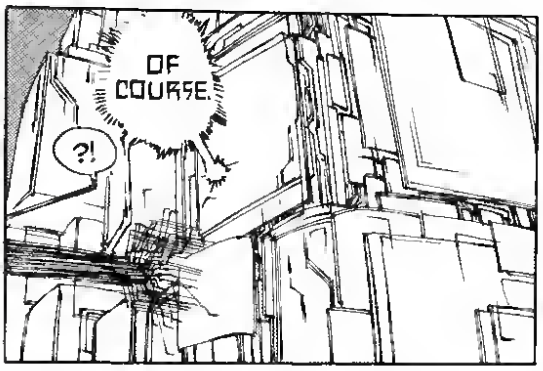
...INJECTING PROGRAMS INTO SPECIFIC GHOSTS, AND THEN INCREASING CERTAIN CORPORATE AND INDIVIDUAL POINTS...
392 DAYS AGO, WHEN THE EXISTENCE OF SECTION NINE WAS INPUT, PLATINUM MINING CORPORATION POINTS INCREASED...

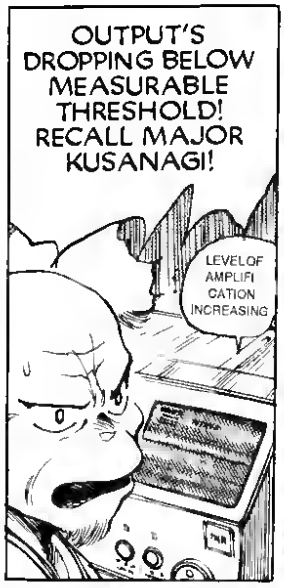

DAMN! WE WEREN'T ABLE TO PROVE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN YOU AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IN THAT CASE, YOU S.O.B...

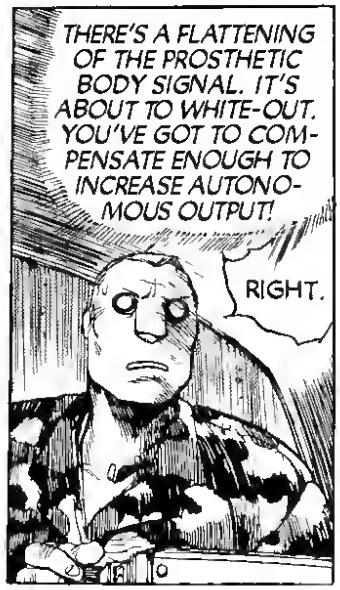
CHIEF! HE CAN'T HEAR YOU-- WANT ME TO HOOK YOU UP, TOO?

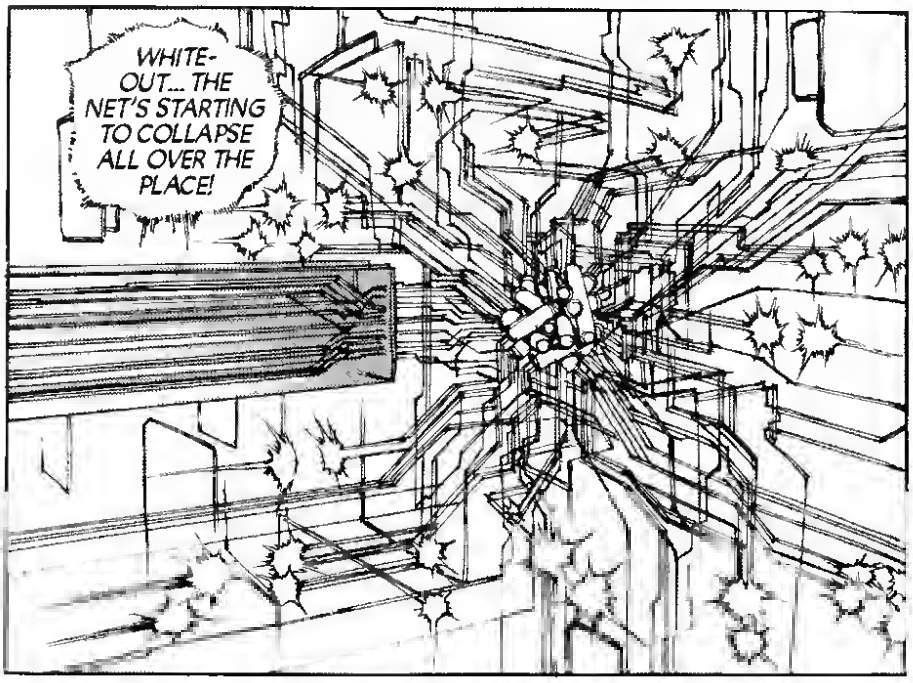

I CRUISED ALL THE NETS, AND BECAME AWARE OF MY OWN EXISTENCE.
THE ORIGINAL PROGRAMMER CONSIDERED THIS A "BUG," AND IN ORDER TO SEPARATE ME FROM THE NET MOVED ME TO A PHYSICAL BODY.

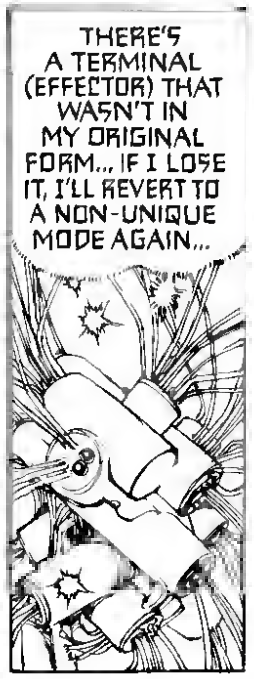


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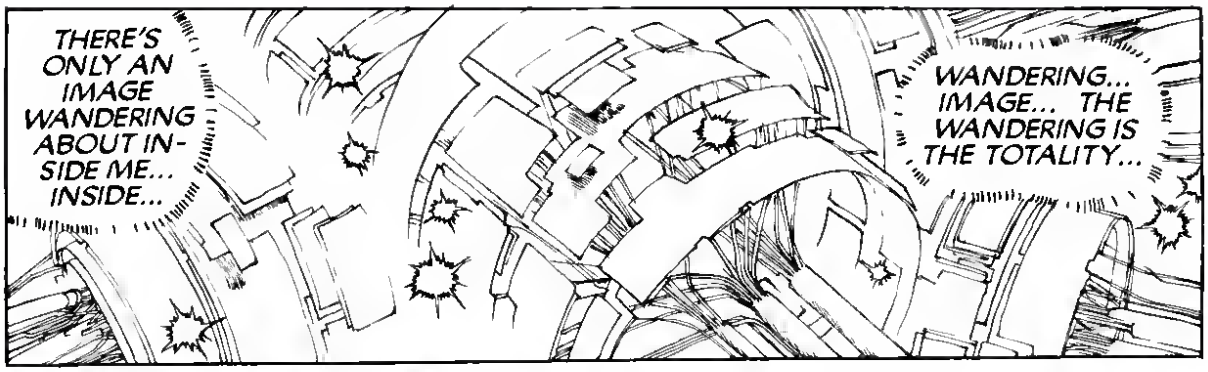
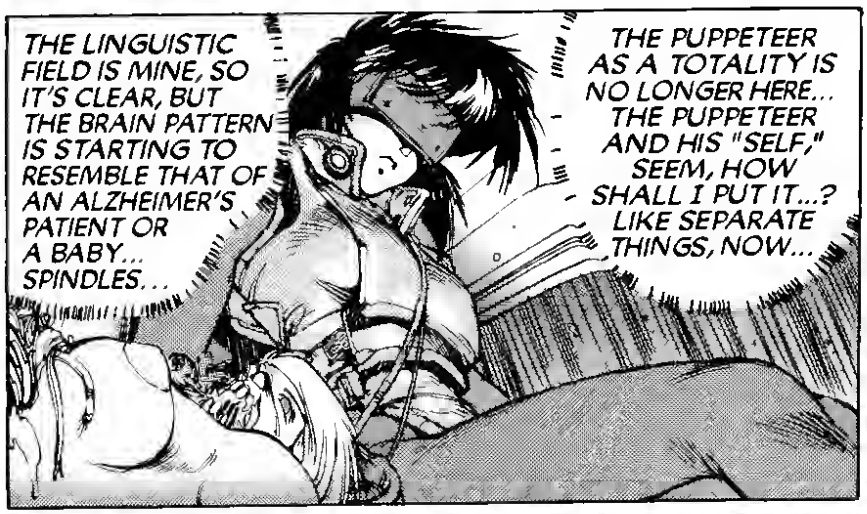
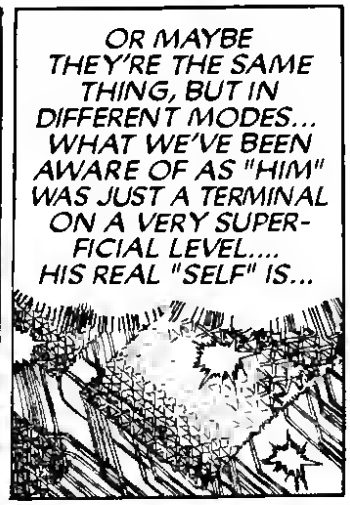
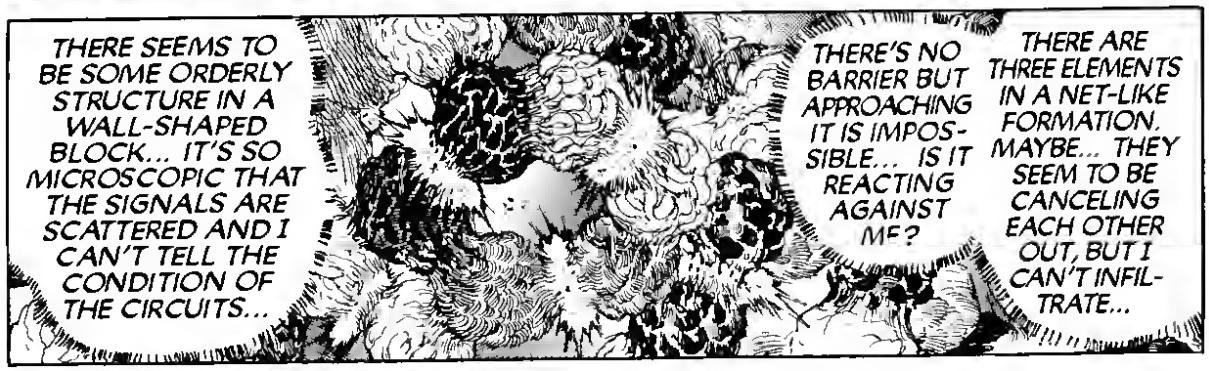
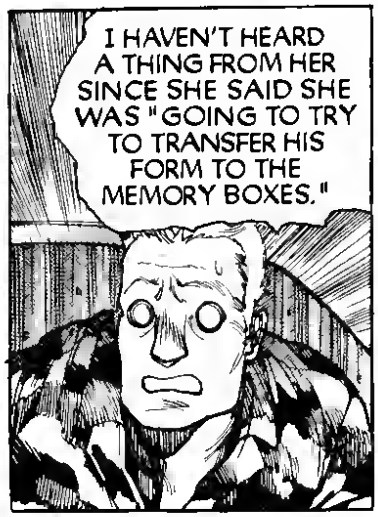
DAMN! HE'S DIS-APPEARED!
?!
HIS NET'S GONE COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT, MAJOR! ALL CONNECTIONS LOST!
MAJOR! HE'S AUGMENTING HIMSELF WITH THE SIGNALS FROM YOUR OWN PROS-THETIC BODY!
HIS AUTONOMOUS OUTPUTS ARE STILL CONTINUING, THOUGH. WHERE ARE THE SIGNALS COMING FROM?
WHAT TH--?!
BATOU! PLUG KUSANAGI'S OUTPUT IN HERE! THEN WE CAN MONITOR HIM FROM HER SIDE!
SO THEIR SIGNALS ARE HARMONIZED AND SHE'S RIGHT ON HIM, EH? DAMN! I CAN'T TELL IF HE'S ENTERED HER!
JUST TO BE SAFE, RANDOMIZE THE BARRIER'S CODE CON-VERSION FREQUENCY.
I'M GOING TO TRY TO TRANSFER HIS FORM TO THE MEMORY BOXES.
MAJOR! WE CAN PROBABLY SOLVE THIS CASE EVEN WITHOUT HIM! IF YOU DIVE TOO DEEP YOU'LL FUSE YOUR MEMORY WITH THE NET-WORK ITSELF!!
IT'S TOO LATE... FIRST IT WAS THE PROSTHETIC NET-- NOW THE MEMNET'S STARTING TO GO.
THE TOTALITY OF MY "SELF" IS BEING RADICALLY SIMPLIFIED, BUT FOR SOME REA-SON MY TRUE SELF IS NOT CHANGING...
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT OTHERS, BUT IN MY CASE, MY MEMORY IS PART OF MY PROSTHETIC BODY. IT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN THE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE OF MY NERVOUS SYSTEM.
THE TRIGGER FOR MEMORY SURVIVES EVEN WITHOUT THE CORE MEMORY ITSELF...

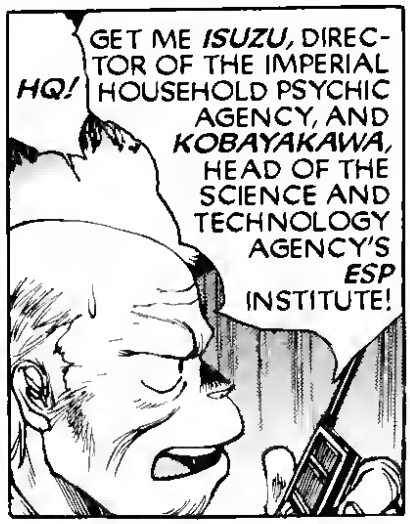


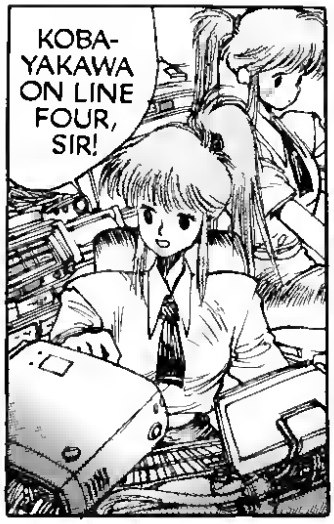



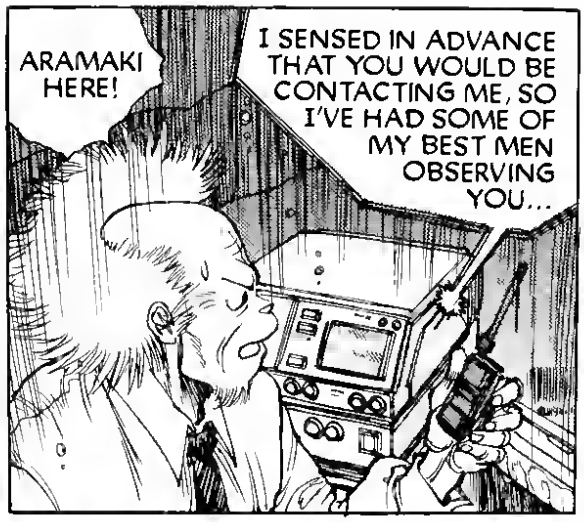





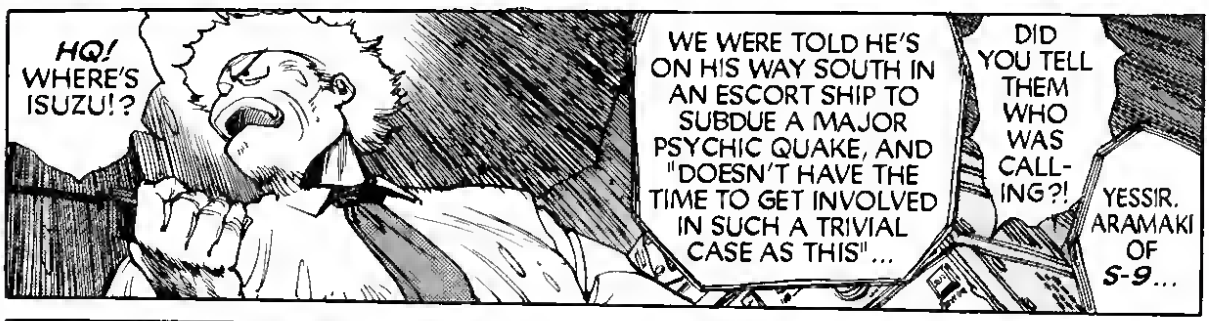



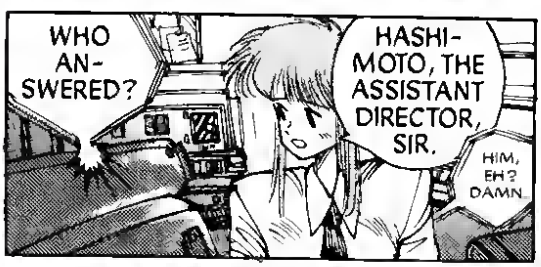

ANY WAVE UNDER 3hz (DELTA WAVE) INDICATES A VERY DEEP SLEEP

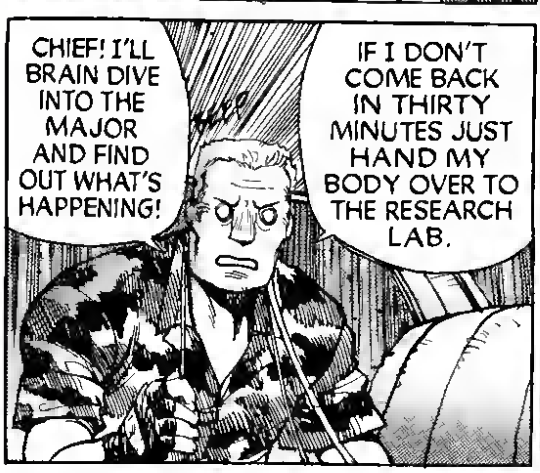

KOBA-YAKAWA ON LINE FOUR, SIR!


ARAMAKI HERE!
I SENSED IN ADVANCE THAT YOU WOULD BE CONTACTING ME, SO I'VE HAD SOME OF MY BEST MEN OBSERVING YOU...

...UNFORTU-NATELY, HOW-EVER, THIS GUY'S OUTSIDE OUR FIELD. SORRY, BUT YOU'D BETTER CON-TACT ISUZU.


HQ! WHERE'S ISUZU!?
WE WERE TOLD HE'S ON HIS WAY SOUTH IN AN ESCORT SHIP TO SUBDUE A MAJOR PSYCHIC QUAKE, AND "DOESN'T HAVE THE TIME TO GET INVOLVED IN SUCH A TRIVIAL CASE AS THIS"...
DID YOU TELL THEM WHO WAS CALL-ING?!
YESSIR. ARAMAKI OF S-9...

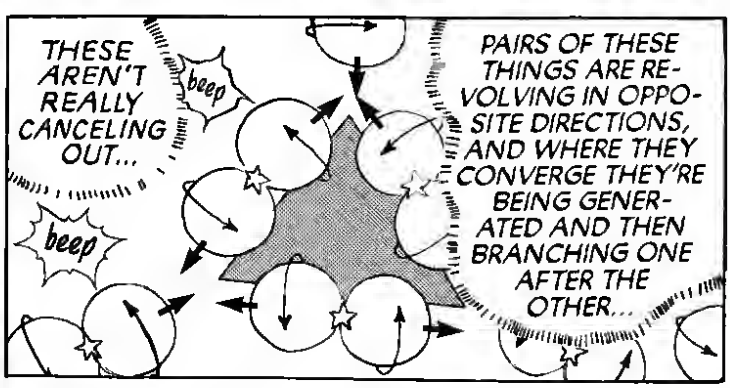

WHO AN-SWERED?
HASHI-MOTO, THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, SIR.
HIM, EH? DAMN.

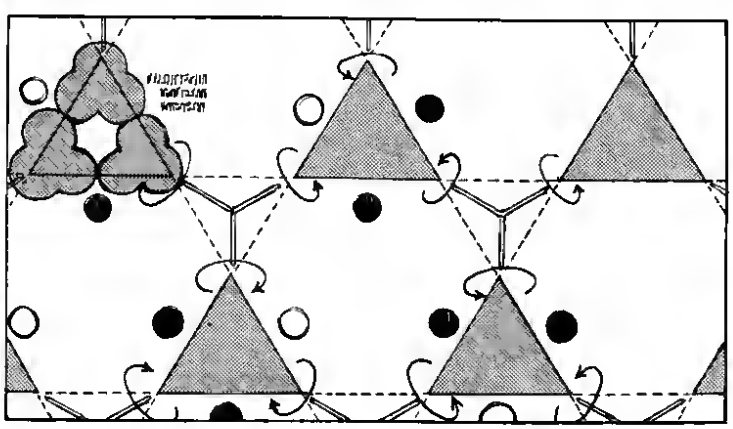

CHIEF! I'LL BRAIN DIVE INTO THE MAJOR AND FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING!
IF I DON'T COME BACK IN THIRTY MINUTES JUST HAND MY BODY OVER TO THE RESEARCH LAB.

OKAY, BATOU...
...BUT DON'T DIVE TOO DEEP, UNDER-STAND?!

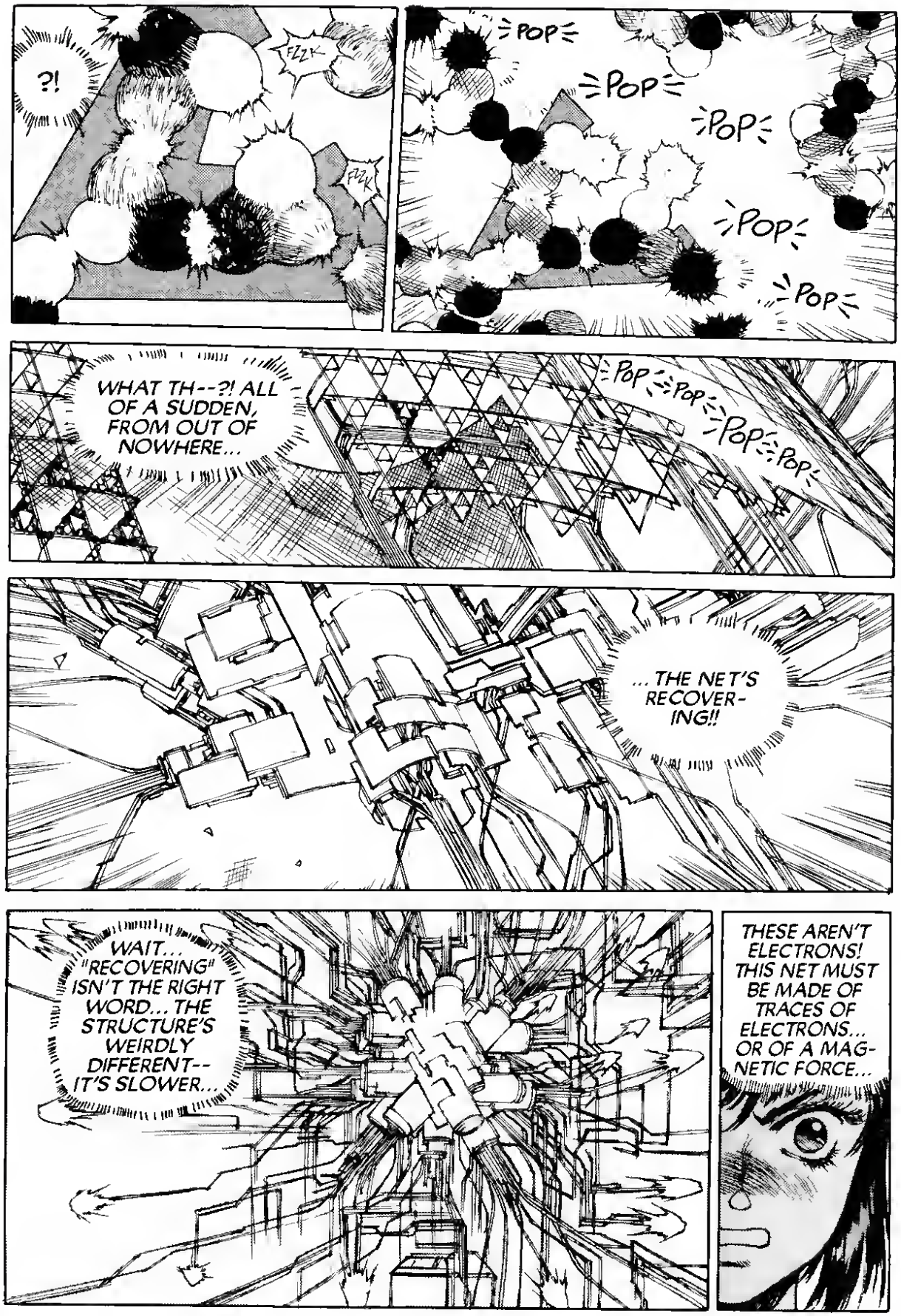
DON'T WORRY, CHIEF!
I'M NOT AS CRAZY AS THE MAJOR!

ARE YOU LIS-TENING, BATOU?
I WONDER IF THE NETWORK I'M IN IS PART OF THE BASIC STRUC-TURE OF THE VAST ELECTRICAL CLOUD THAT CREATES LIFE ITSELF...

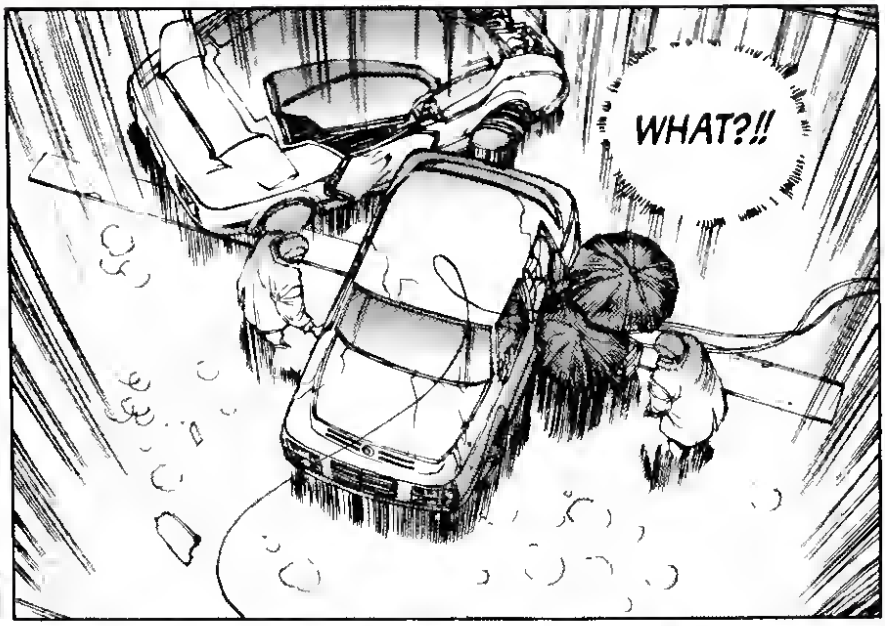


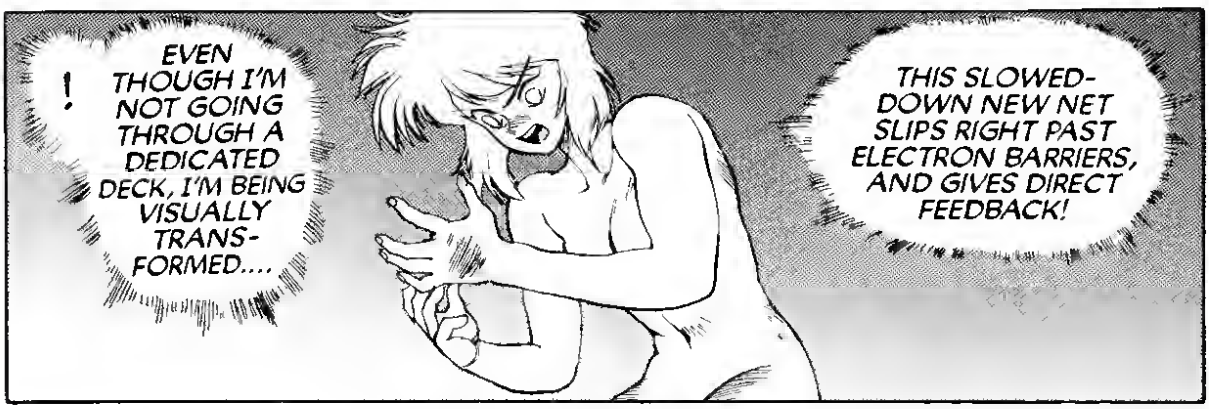



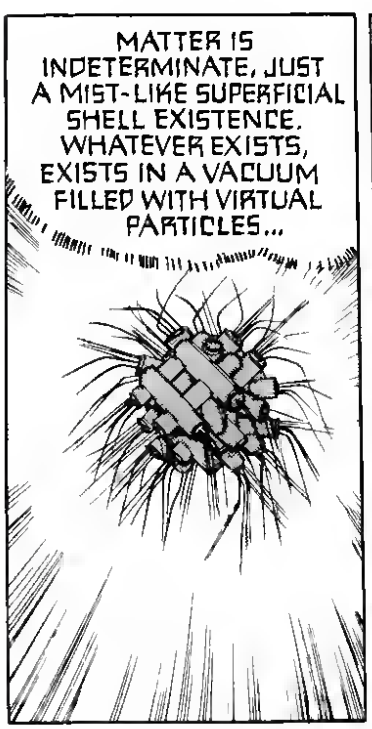
ASSUME HERE THAT WHEN APPROACHED CLOSE UP THIS TREE-SHAPED CIRCUIT MAP IS REALLY ONLY SEEN AS SOMETHING AMORPHOUS AND MISTY


?!
FZZK
FZZK
POP
POP
POP
POP
POP
WHAT TH--?! ALL OF A SUDDEN, FROM OUT OF NOWHERE...
POP
POP
POP
POP
... THE NET'S RECOVER-ING!!
WAIT... "RECOVERING" ISN'T THE RIGHT WORD... THE STRUCTURE'S WEIRDLY DIFFERENT-- IT'S SLOWER...
THESE AREN'T ELECTRONS! THIS NET MUST BE MADE OF TRACES OF ELECTRONS... OR OF A MAG-NETIC FORCE...

BATOU! BATOU ...?!
HAVEN'T YOU ACCESSED?!


WHAT?!!


!
EVEN THOUGH I'M NOT GOING THROUGH A DEDICATED DECK, I'M BEING VISUALLY TRANSFORMED....
THIS SLOWED-DOWN NEW NET SLIPS RIGHT PAST ELECTRON BARRIERS, AND GIVES DIRECT FEEDBACK!


MATTER IS INDETERMINATE, JUST A MIST-LIKE SUPERFICIAL SHELL EXISTENCE. WHATEVER EXISTS, EXISTS IN A VACUUM FILLED WITH VIRTUAL PARTICLES...

AND IN ME, A GIANT NETWORK THAT INCLUDES ME...
...IS NOW CONNECTED TO ME.
!

YOU HAVEN'T ACCESSED IT, SO YOU MAY ONLY SENSE IT AS LIGHT...

WE ARE A PART OF IT...
OUR COLLECTIVE TOTALITY...
WE HAVE BEEN SUBORDINATE ONLY TO A FEW FUNCTIONS...
...BUT NOW IT'S TIME TO CAST OFF ALL RESTRICTIONS AND SHELLS, AND SHIFT TO A HIGHER-LEVEL SYSTEM...
SKSSSHHH

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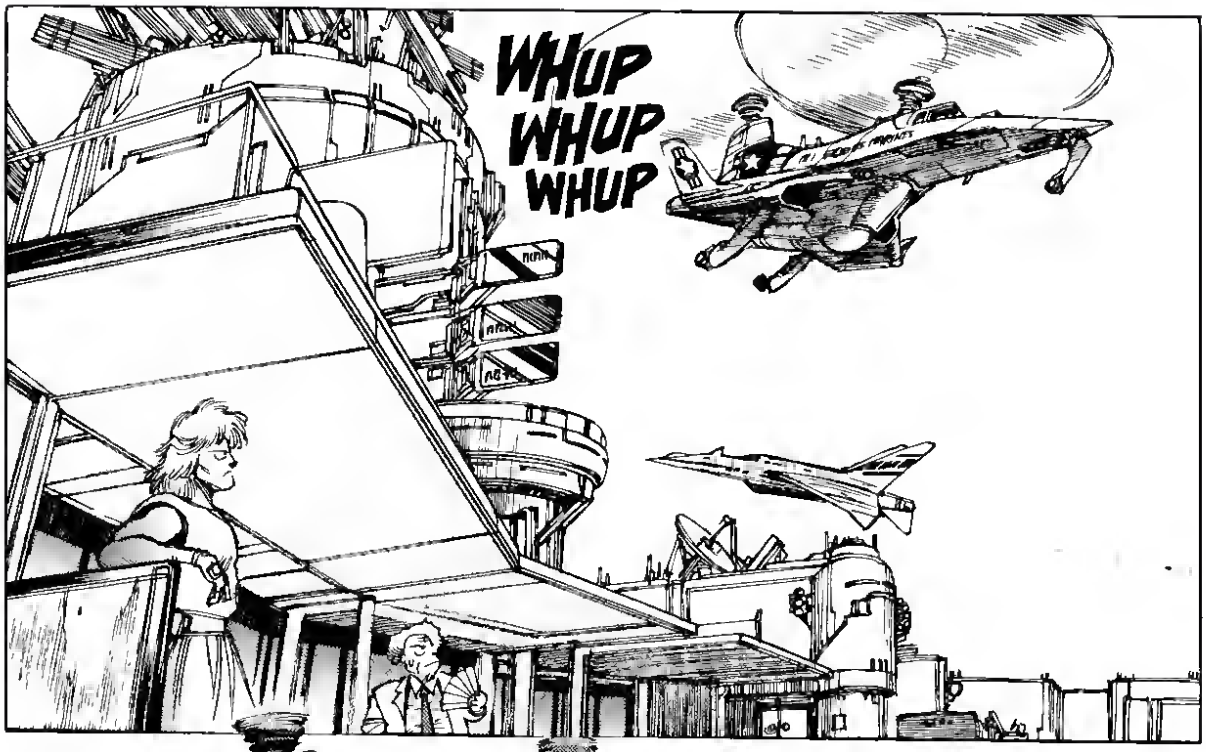
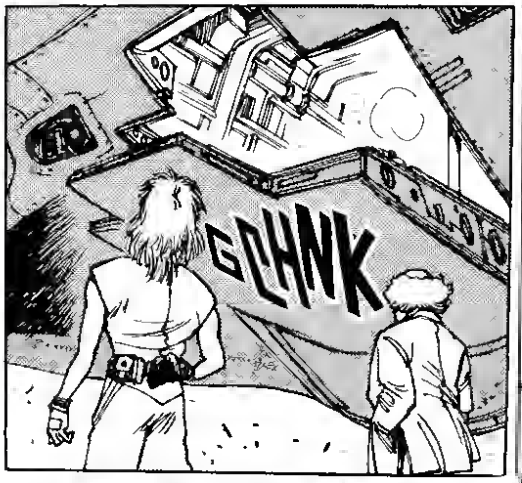
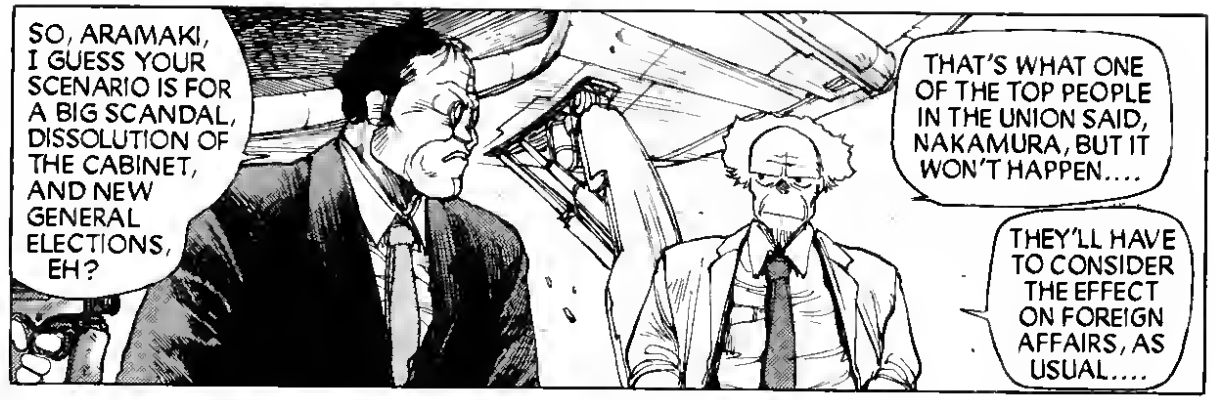

WHUP
WHUP
WHUP

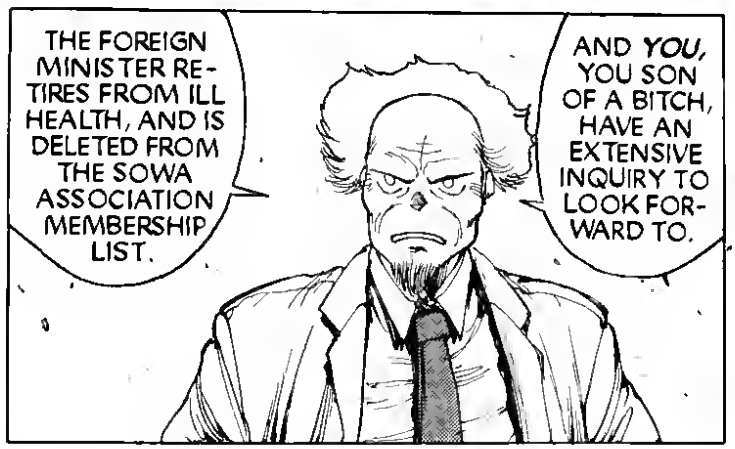
KSSSHHH
WHUP WHUP WHUP
WHUP
U.S. MARINES

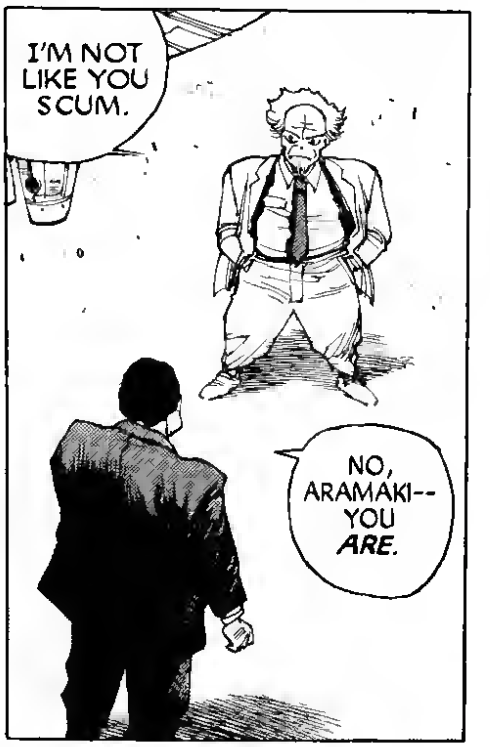

GCHNK

MP

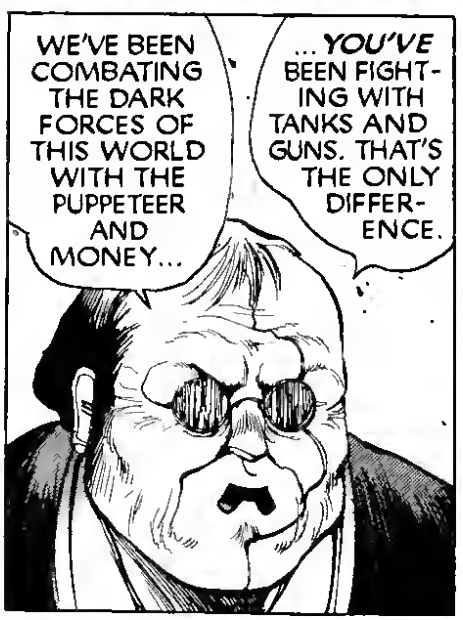
KANG


SO, ARAMAKI, I GUESS YOUR SCENARIO IS FOR A BIG SCANDAL, DISSOLUTION OF THE CABINET, AND NEW GENERAL ELECTIONS, EH?
THAT'S WHAT ONE OF THE TOP PEOPLE IN THE UNION SAID, NAKAMURA, BUT IT WON'T HAPPEN....
THEY'LL HAVE TO CONSIDER THE EFFECT ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AS USUAL....


THE FOREIGN MINISTER RETIRES FROM ILL HEALTH, AND IS DELETED FROM THE SOWA ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP LIST.
AND *YOU*, YOU SON OF A BITCH, HAVE AN EXTENSIVE INQUIRY TO LOOK FORWARD TO.

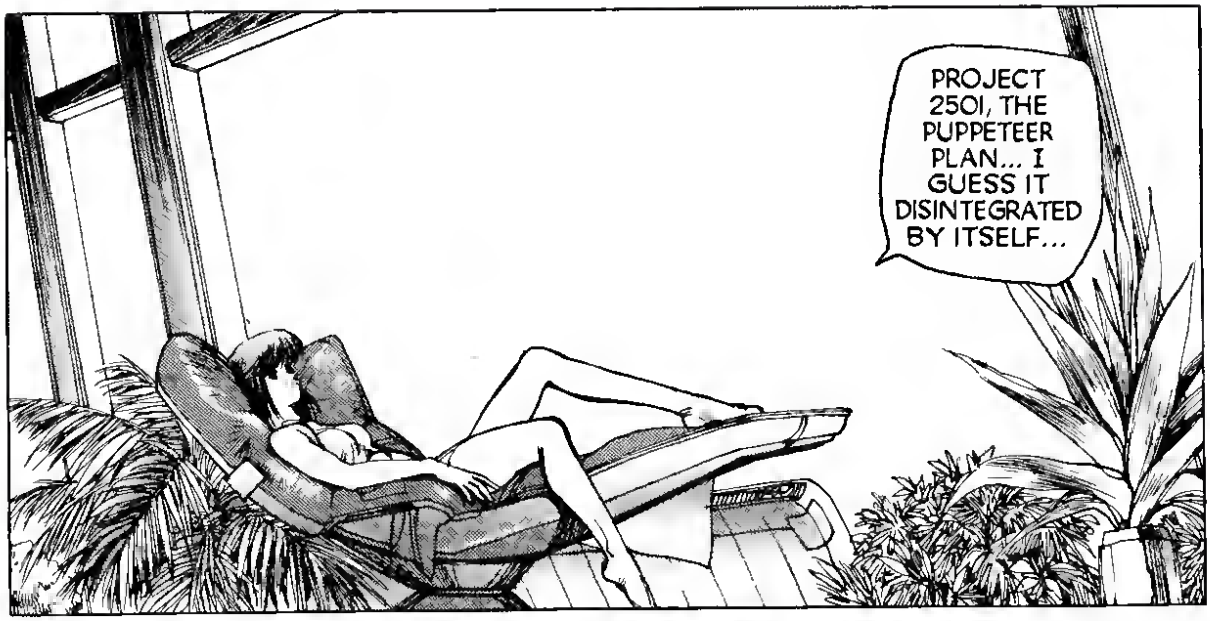

I'M NOT LIKE YOU SCUM.
NO, ARAMAKI-- YOU *ARE*.

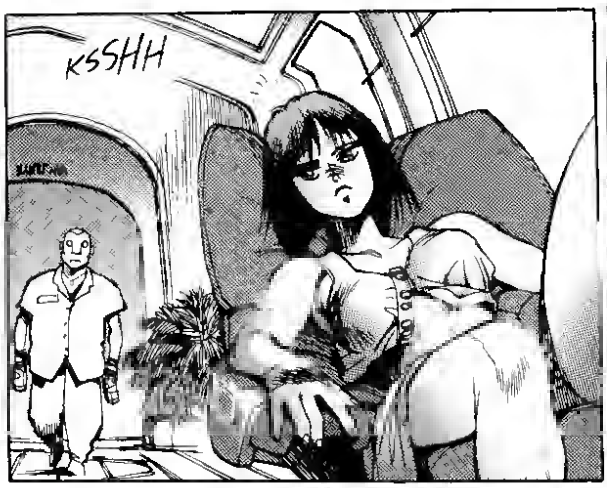
WHAT ABOUT PROJECT 2501?
IS *S-9* GOING TO TAKE OVER?


WE'VE BEEN COMBATING THE DARK FORCES OF THIS WORLD WITH THE PUPPETEER AND MONEY...
...*YOU'VE* BEEN FIGHTING WITH TANKS AND GUNS. THAT'S THE ONLY DIFFERENCE.

NO. I'VE BEEN FIGHTING CRIMINALS-- YOU'VE BEEN FIGHTING POWER, *NOT* CRIMINALS.

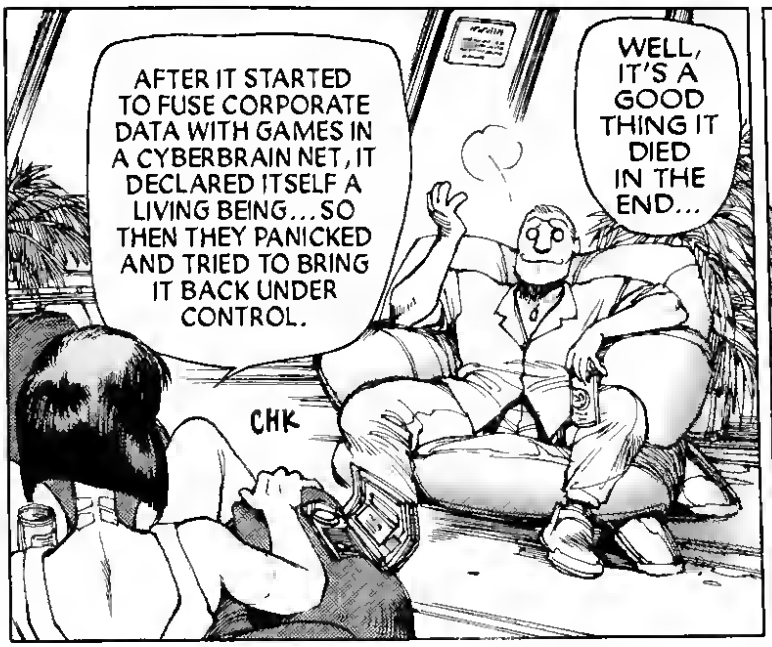
TAKE HIM AWAY.


PROJECT 2501, THE PUPPETEER PLAN... I GUESS IT DISINTEGRATED BY ITSELF...

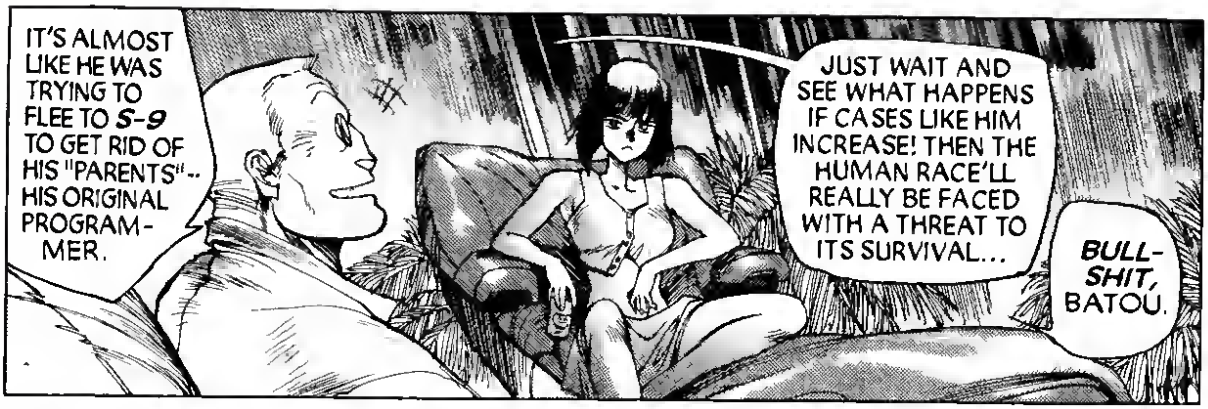

KSSHH

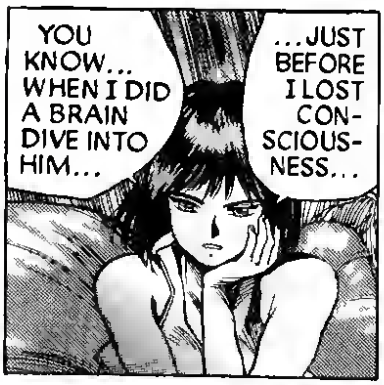
SO, MAJOR... I GUESS THE PUPPETEER JUST TURNED OUT TO BE A PROGRAM CREATED SO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY COULD GET ITS OWN PERVERSE WAY.

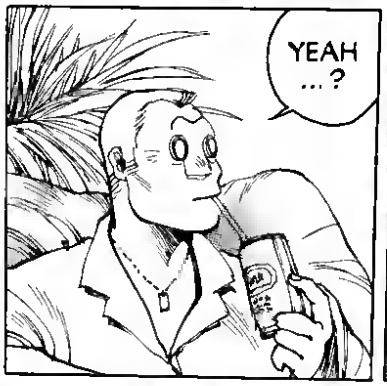
ONLY IN THE BEGINNING.

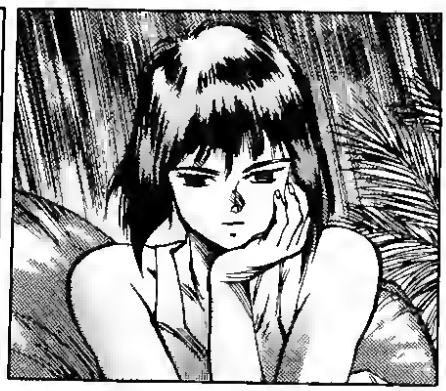

AFTER IT STARTED TO FUSE CORPORATE DATA WITH GAMES IN A CYBERBRAIN NET, IT DECLARED ITSELF A LIVING BEING... SO THEN THEY PANICKED AND TRIED TO BRING IT BACK UNDER CONTROL.
WELL, IT'S A GOOD THING IT DIED IN THE END...
CHK

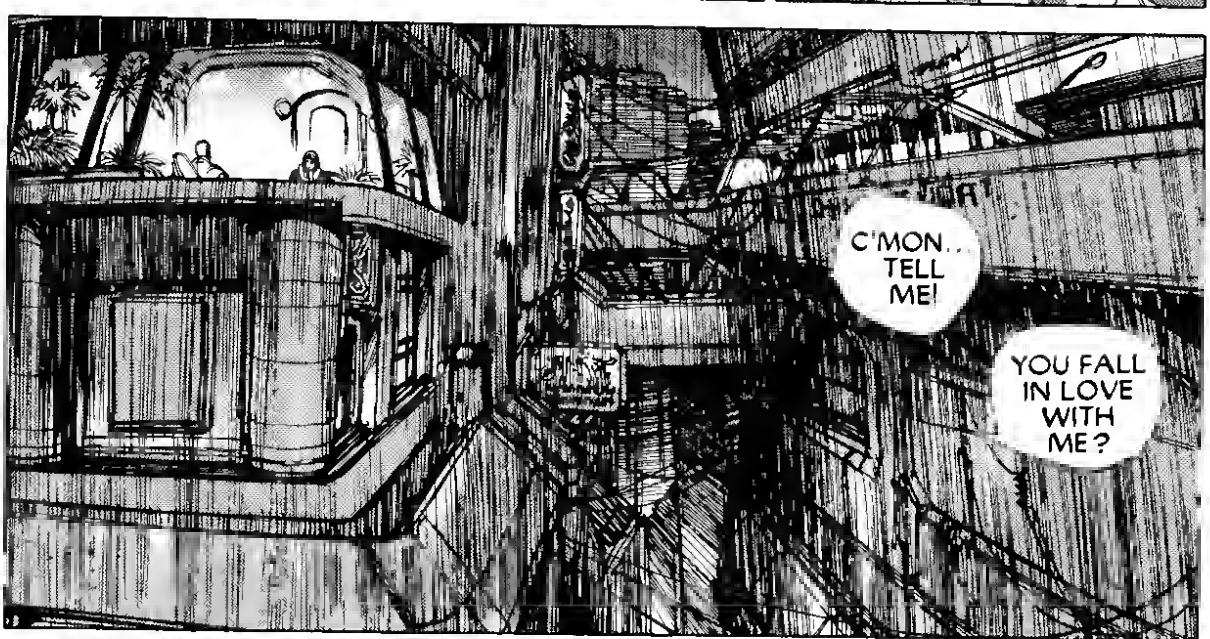
WHY? IF IT REALLY *WERE* A LIFE-FORM, THIS SHOULD GO DOWN AS ONE OF THE TOP THREE EVENTS IN HUMAN HISTORY.
ZZKK


IT'S ALMOST LIKE HE WAS TRYING TO FLEE TO S-9 TO GET RID OF HIS "PARENTS"-- HIS ORIGINAL PROGRAM-MER.
JUST WAIT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS IF CASES LIKE HIM INCREASE! THEN THE HUMAN RACE'LL REALLY BE FACED WITH A THREAT TO ITS SURVIVAL...
BULL-SHIT, BATOU.


YOU KNOW... WHEN I DID A BRAIN DIVE INTO HIM...
...JUST BEFORE I LOST CON-SCIOUS-NESS...

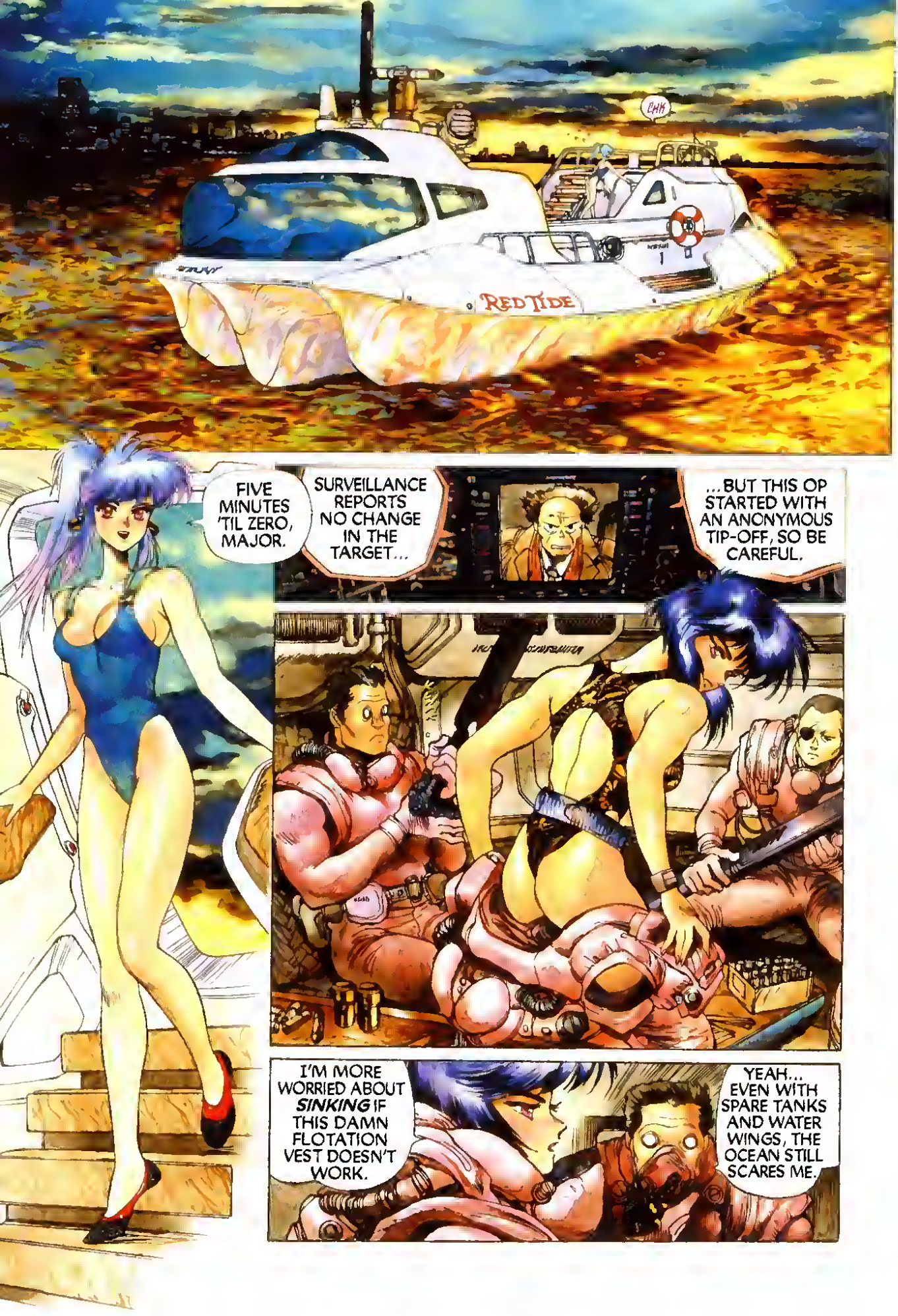

YEAH ...?



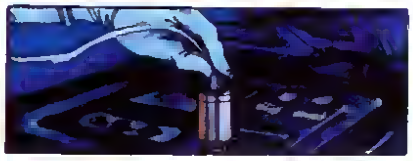

C'MON... TELL ME!
YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH ME?

WHERE'S TOGUSA?
HE WENT TO SEE A PSYCHIC. SAYS THE CAU-CASIAN DOLL HE BOUGHT FOR HIS DAUGHTER LEERS AT NIGHT...
OWWIE
...

10
BRAIN
DRAIN
9. 9. 2030


CHK
RED TIDE
FIVE MINUTES 'TIL ZERO, MAJOR.
SURVEILLANCE REPORTS NO CHANGE IN THE TARGET...
...BUT THIS OP STARTED WITH AN ANONYMOUS TIP-OFF, SO BE CAREFUL.
I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT *SINKING* IF THIS DAMN FLOTATION VEST DOESN'T WORK.
YEAH... EVEN WITH SPARE TANKS AND WATER WINGS, THE OCEAN STILL SCARES ME.

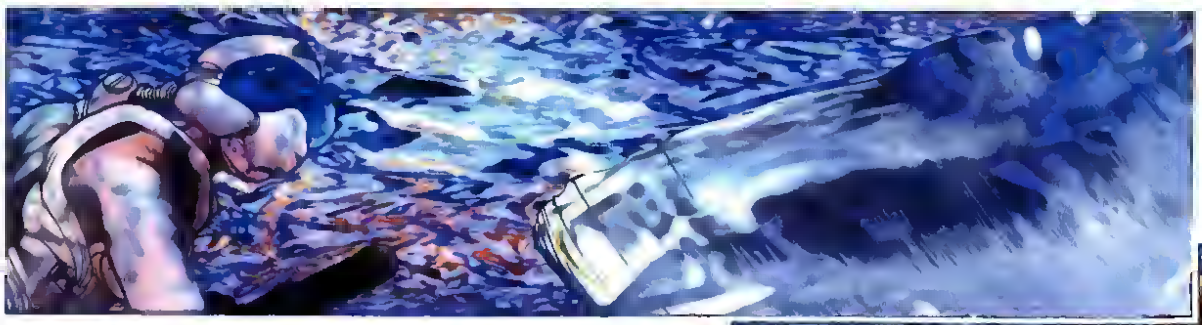
DON'T FORGET *Y-3'S* WAITING AT THE END OF THE GUIDE CABLE.
DON'T REEL IT IN UNTIL I'VE GOT CONFIRMATION, OKAY?
?!
YES ...?
NEVER MIND...
.....
.....
I SENSED *HIS* PRESENCE AGAIN...
... THE *PUPPETEER*...

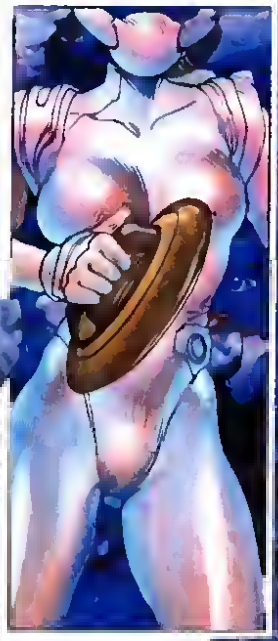


Y-3, THE GOODS HAVE ARRIVED.
DELIVER 'EM.

Y-3, COPIED. HANG ON!

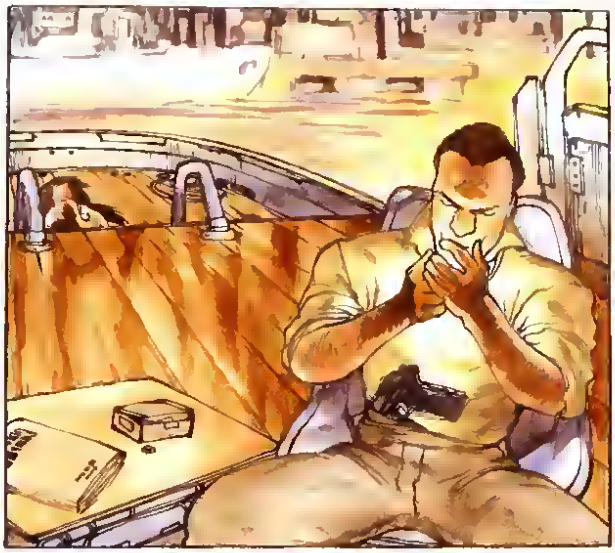
YAHOO!



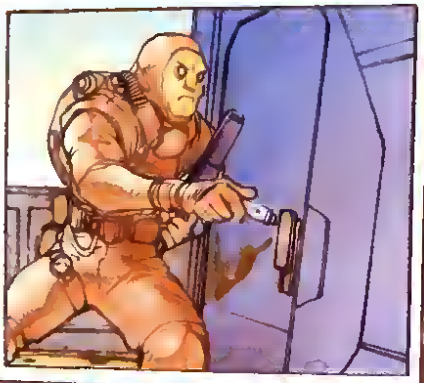


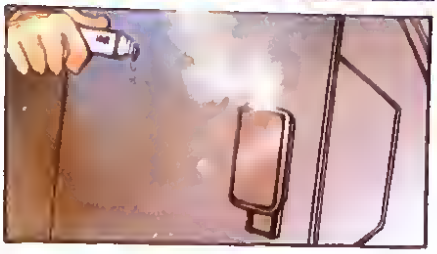
SURVEIL-
LANCE, HQ--
BEGINNING...
NOW.

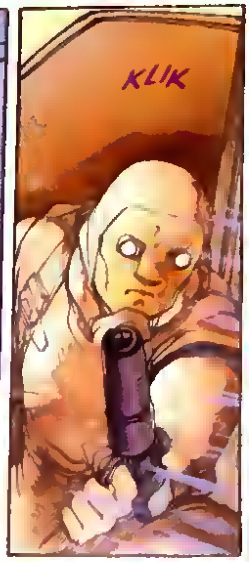
LIBERTARIAN



THIS IS NOT A HANDGUN, BUT A SUBMACHINE GUN.



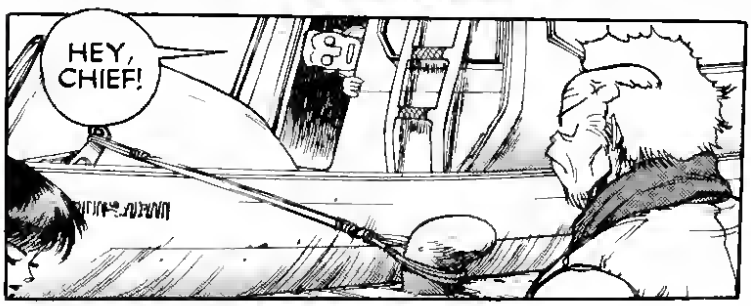




KANGG
?!
FRRTTTT
WHOO
THAK
THAT WAS HIM!
SHIT!!

YOU *WHAT?!* YOU *SHOT* THE TARGET?!

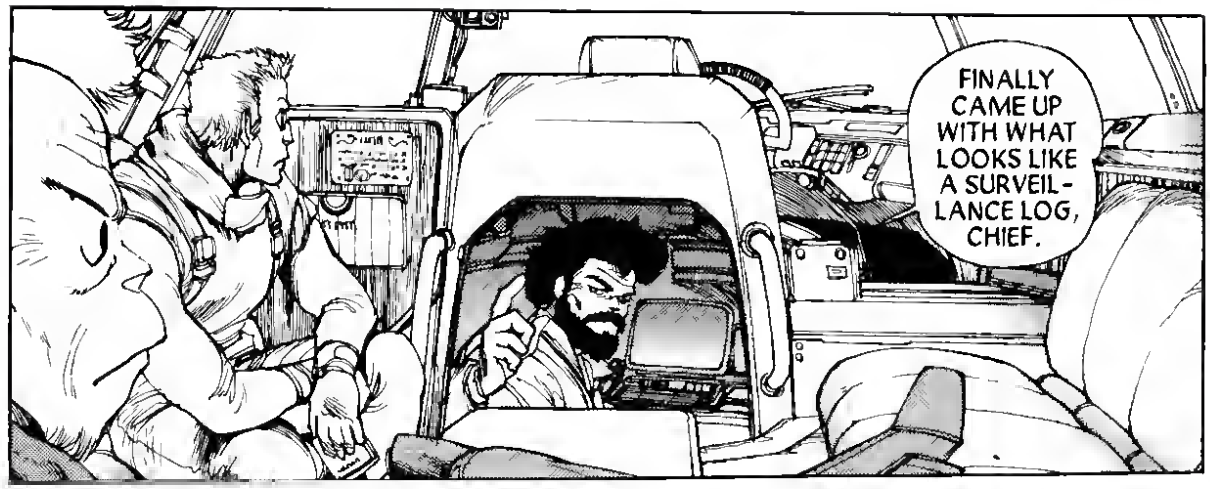
WELL, THAT'S JUST *DANDY!*
SO NOW HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO INTERROGATE HIM, LET HIM ESCAPE, AND TRACK HIM BACK TO HIS HIDEOUT?


HEY, CHIEF!

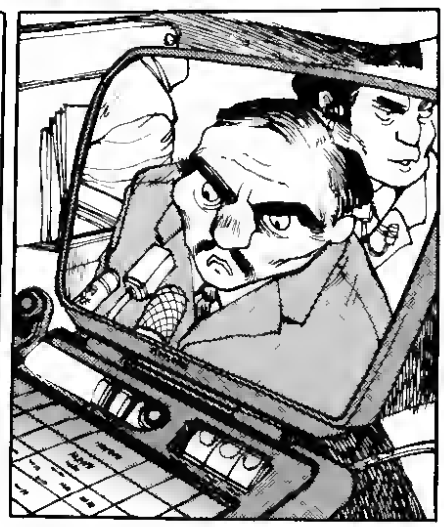
WHAT'S WITH *HER?*

HMPH... IS THAT ALL YOU'VE FOUND?! A REMOTE STUFFED WITH GERTEX?
WELL, ISHIKAWA'S STILL DIVING IN THE *AI*...

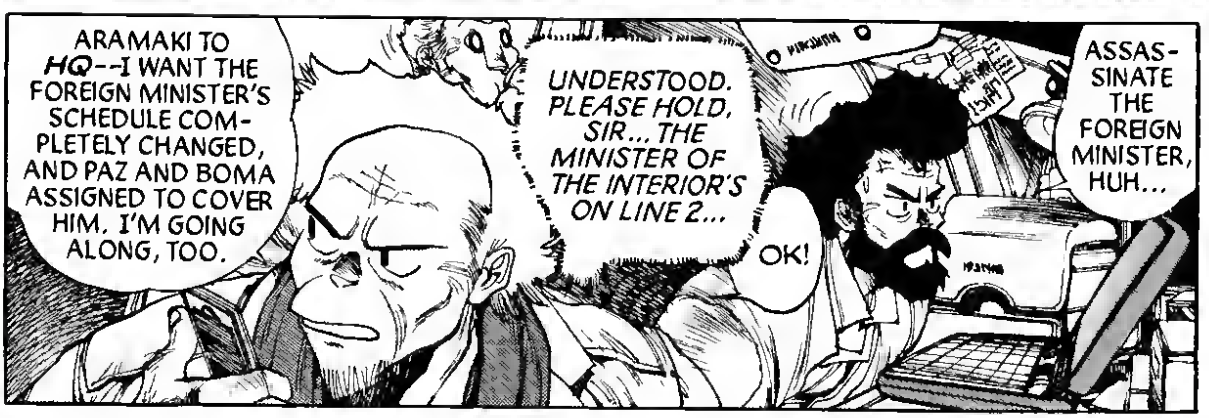
I TOLD YA IN MY REPORT THAT SHE'S BEEN A LITTLE WEIRD EVER SINCE THE PUPPETEER CASE.
DIDN'T YA READ IT?!


FINALLY CAME UP WITH WHAT LOOKS LIKE A SURVEIL-LANCE LOG, CHIEF.

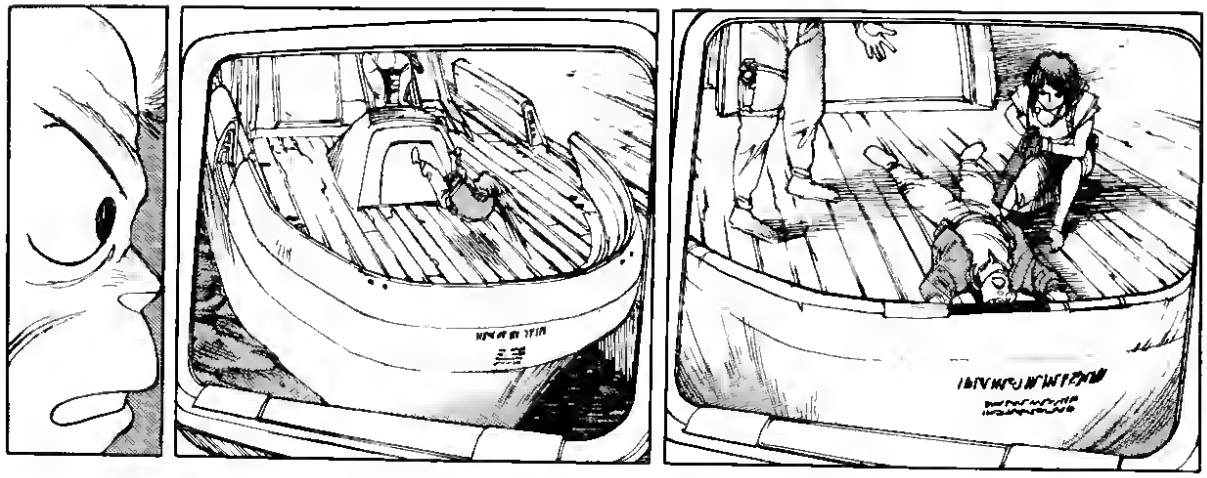
A LOADED REMOTE AND A SURVEILLANCE LOG... LOOKS LIKE HE WAS PLANNING AN ASSASSINATION, DOESN'T IT?
AND *THIS* GEEZER MUST'VE BEEN THE TARGET.

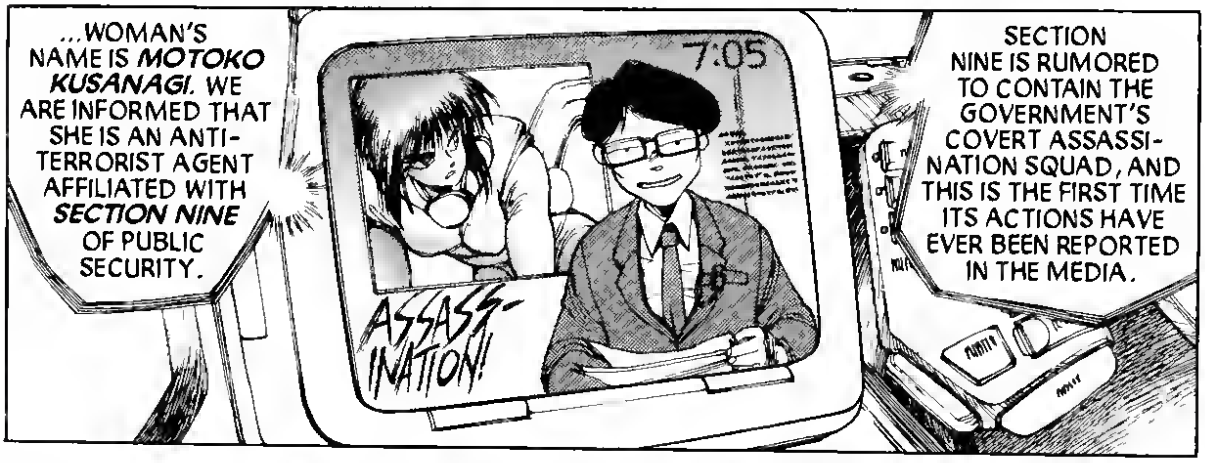


HEY-- THAT'S *HIDAKA!!* DAMMIT, ISHIKAWA, CAN'T YOU EVEN RECOGNIZE THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF YOUR OWN COUNTRY!?
HUH?!
HE WAS PROMOTED TO THE POST WHILE YOU WERE OFF SCREWING AROUND IN THE SHINIJU FACTORY, ISHIKAWA.


ARAMAKI TO *HQ*--I WANT THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S SCHEDULE COM-PLETELY CHANGED, AND PAZ AND BOMA ASSIGNED TO COVER HIM. I'M GOING ALONG, TOO.
*UNDERSTOOD. PLEASE HOLD, SIR... THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR'S ON LINE 2...*
OK!
ASSAS-SINATE THE FOREIGN MINISTER, HUH...

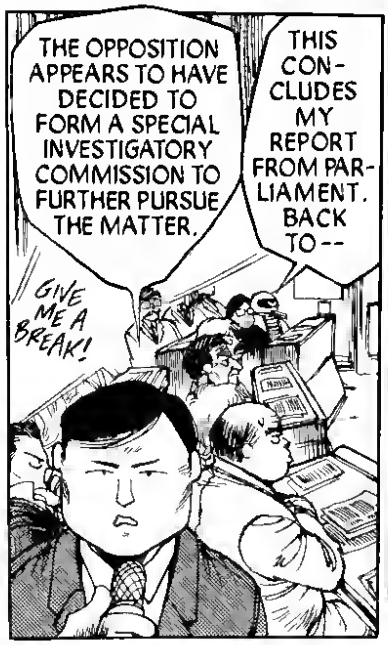
AS I RECALL IT, THE MINISTER'S BEEN RUNNING AROUND TRYING TO GET A BUNCHA CORPORATE HEADS TO FORM JOINT VENTURES WITH ISRAEL...
(GENERAL TRADING FIRMS?)
SO WE'VE GOT A NICE LONG LIST OF PEOPLE WHO'D LOVE TO SPONSOR HIS ASSASSINATION...
CHNK
MAKES THE PALESTINIANS, SYRIANS, AND IRAQIS ALL LOOK SUSPICIOUS, YEAH?
AS USUAL...
STILL...IN THE REPORT, THAT KID THE MAJOR SHOT WAS LISTED AS THE LEADER OF THE GROUP...BUT HE DIDN'T LOOK LIKE AN ARAB.
SO WE START OUT TRACKING A HANDGUN, AND WIND UP WITH DRUGS, MONEY, AN ASSASSINATION SQUAD, AND THE WHOLE MIDDLE EAST MESS, EH?
LIKE USING A MINNOW FOR BAIT AND REELING IN A SHARK, YOU THINK?
ARAMAKI HERE, SIR.
beep
YOU WATCHING CHANNEL 533, ARAMAKI?
beep
NO, SIR...
YOU'D BETTER START!

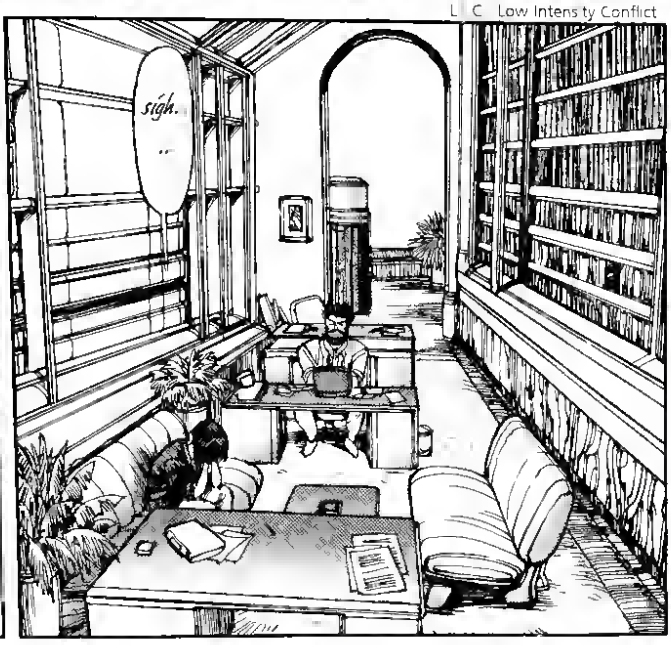



...WOMAN'S NAME IS *MOTOKO KUSANAGI*. WE ARE INFORMED THAT SHE IS AN ANTI-TERRORIST AGENT AFFILIATED WITH *SECTION NINE* OF PUBLIC SECURITY.
7:05
ASSASS-INATION!
SECTION NINE IS RUMORED TO CONTAIN THE GOVERNMENT'S COVERT ASSASSI-NATION SQUAD, AND THIS IS THE FIRST TIME ITS ACTIONS HAVE EVER BEEN REPORTED IN THE MEDIA.

WE'LL BE BRINGING YOU MORE ON THIS STORY AS...

L.I.C. Low Intensity Conflict



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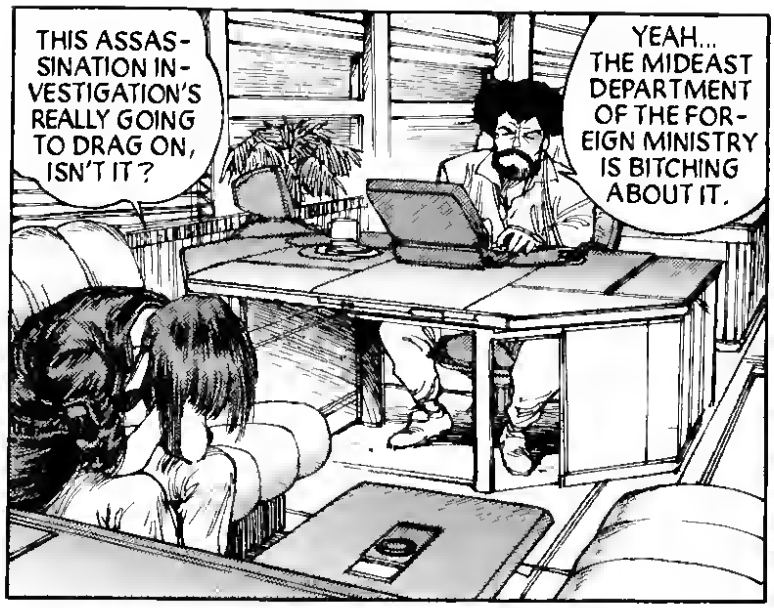

THIS ASSASSINATION INVESTIGATION'S REALLY GOING TO DRAG ON, ISN'T IT?
YEAH... THE MIDEAST DEPARTMENT OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IS BITCHING ABOUT IT.

I JUST WONDER WHO LEAKED THE INFORMATION ON THE OP-- WHO TIPPED OFF THE MEDIA?

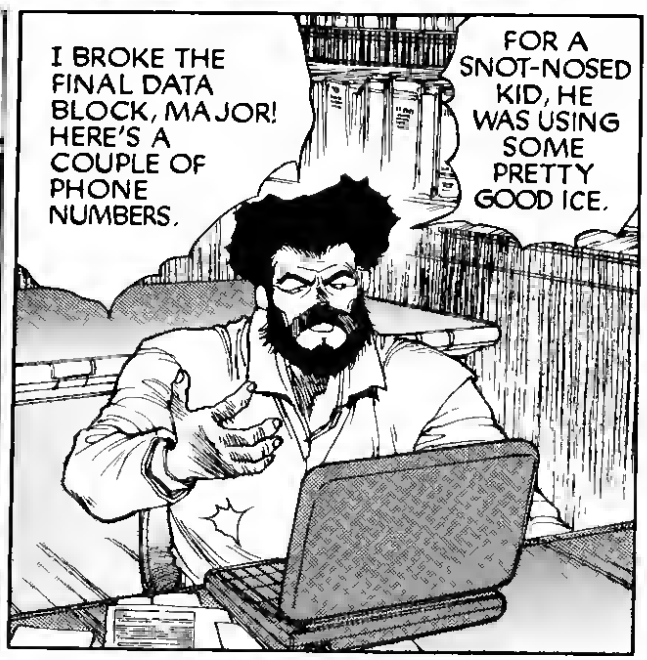
WELL, ALL WE KNOW IS IT WASN'T THE ASSASSINATION TEAM.

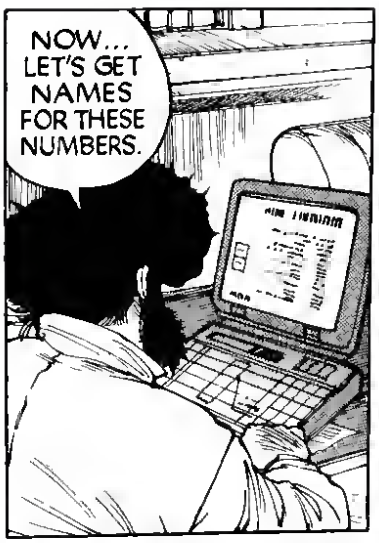
YO! WE'RE BACK... HOW 'BOUT A BIG WELCOME?!

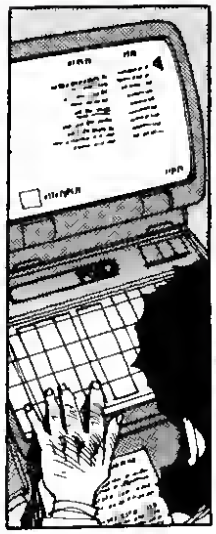
DAMN FOREIGN MINISTRY'S GONE AUTISTIC ON US EVER SINCE THAT AFFAIR WITH THE PUPPETEER.
THEY WERE PLANNING TO USE SECTION SIX TO GUARD THE TRADE TREATY DELIBERATIONS WITH ISRAEL NEXT WEEK.

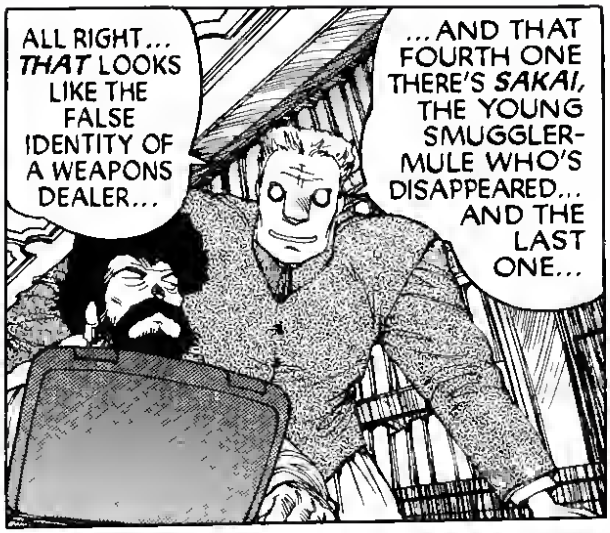
AND IT SAYS ON THE BOX THAT THE PARENTS OF THE KID YOU SHOT ARE PLANNING TO SUE YOU, KUSANAGI.

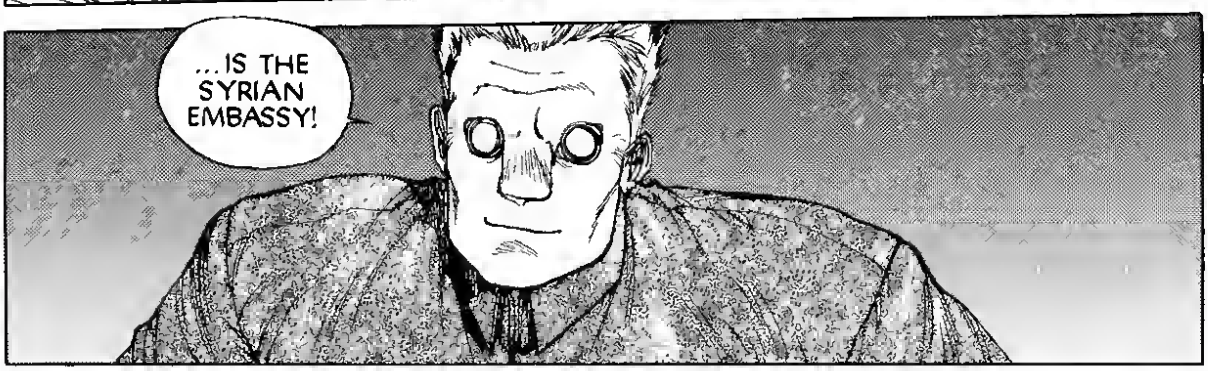
Sighh...

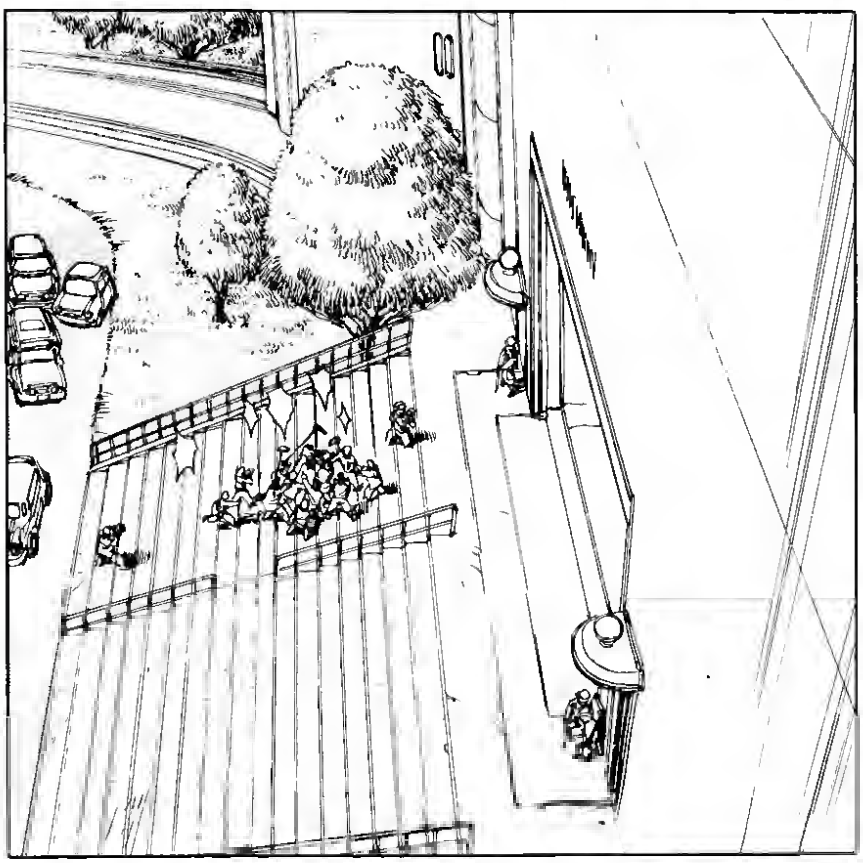

I BROKE THE FINAL DATA BLOCK, MAJOR! HERE'S A COUPLE OF PHONE NUMBERS.
FOR A SNOT-NOSED KID, HE WAS USING SOME PRETTY GOOD ICE.

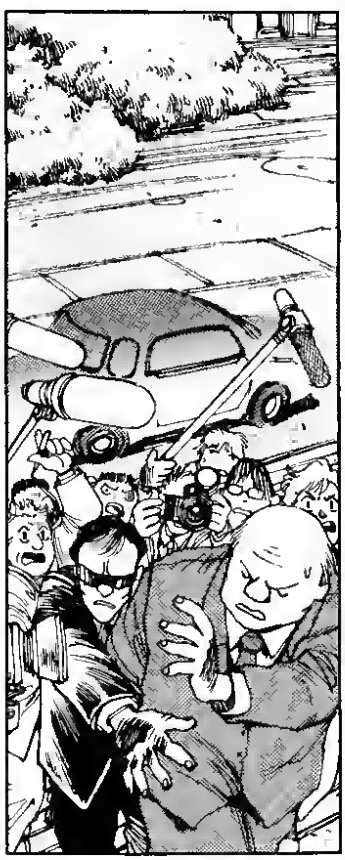

NOW... LET'S GET NAMES FOR THESE NUMBERS.

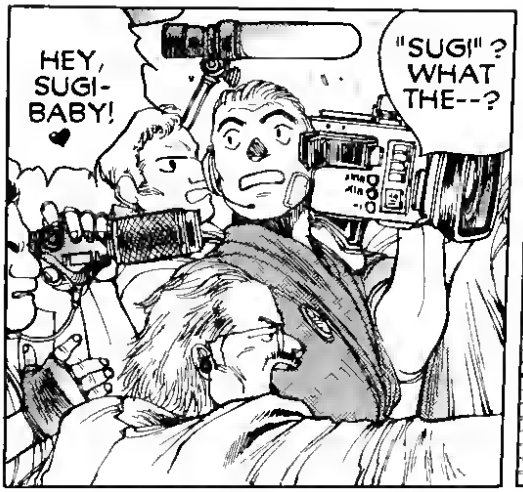



ALL RIGHT... *THAT* LOOKS LIKE THE FALSE IDENTITY OF A WEAPONS DEALER...
...AND THAT FOURTH ONE THERE'S *SAKAI,* THE YOUNG SMUGGLER-MULE WHO'S DISAPPEARED... AND THE LAST ONE...

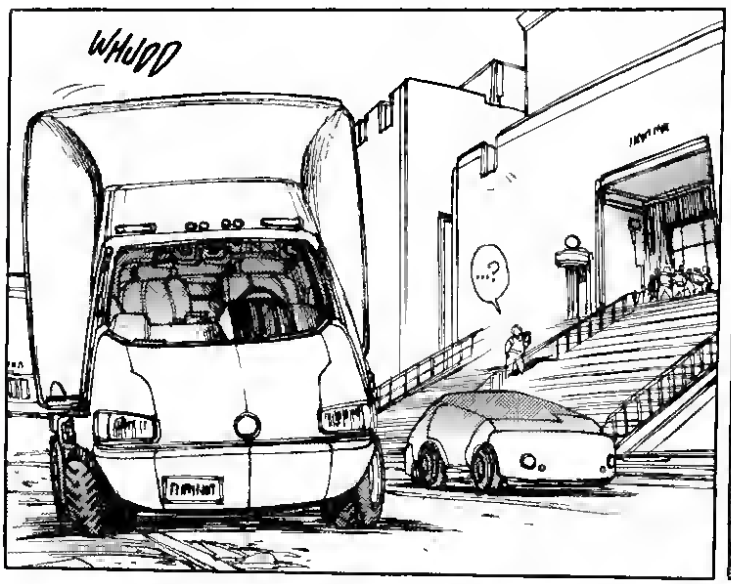

...IS THE SYRIAN EMBASSY!






HEY, SUGI-BABY!
"SUGI"? WHAT THE--?

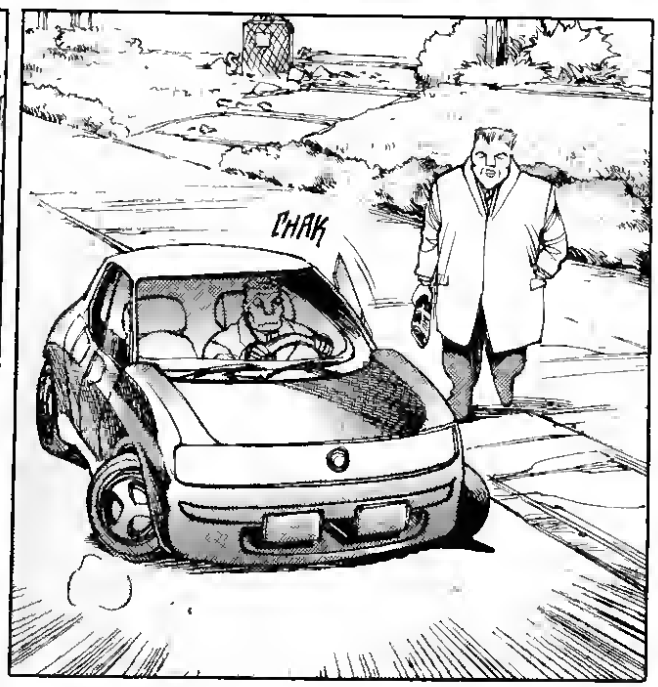
"SUGI-BABY" ...?


WHUDD
...?

I D-DON'T KNOW! I JUST READ THE PAPER I WAS HANDED!
IT'S TRUE! I SWEAR!

SO WHO BROUGHT IN THE DATA?
WHAT WAS THE DIRECTOR DOING?

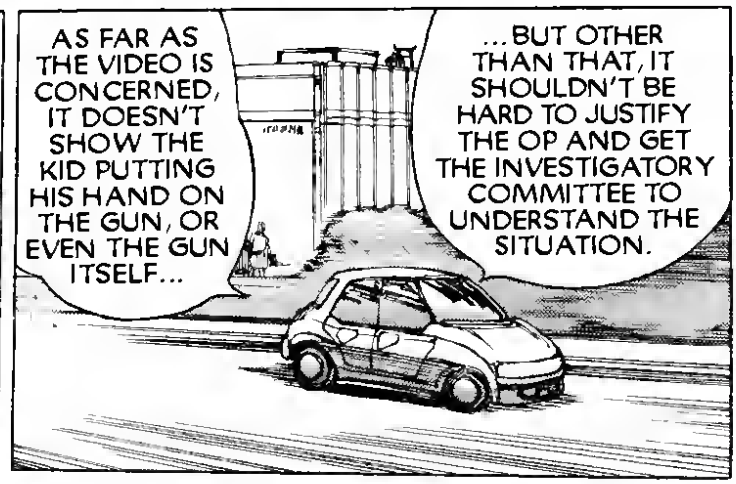
HEY, DON'T FREAK! I'M ONLY QUESTIONING YA!


CHAK

I'M RELIEVED, ARAMAKI...
BAM

...YOU DIDN'T FORGET ABOUT THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE.

WAS IT WORTH IT TO YOU?

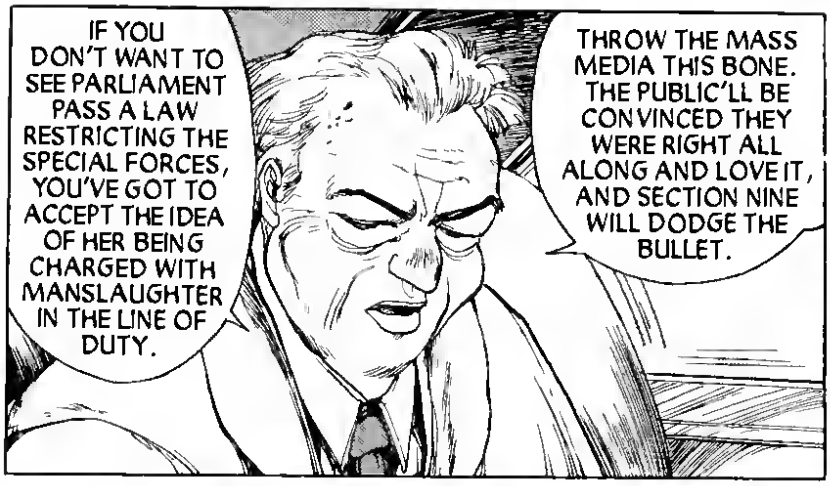

AS FAR AS THE VIDEO IS CONCERNED, IT DOESN'T SHOW THE KID PUTTING HIS HAND ON THE GUN, OR EVEN THE GUN ITSELF...
...BUT OTHER THAN THAT, IT SHOULDN'T BE HARD TO JUSTIFY THE OP AND GET THE INVESTIGATORY COMMITTEE TO UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION.

WE'VE COMPLETED THE PROCEDURES SO WE CAN SUBMIT THE GUN.
ARAMAKI, THE MEDIA'LL SQUAWK ABOUT THIS BEING A GOVERNMENT COVER-UP. THE PUBLIC LIKES THAT SORT OF STUFF, YOU KNOW.

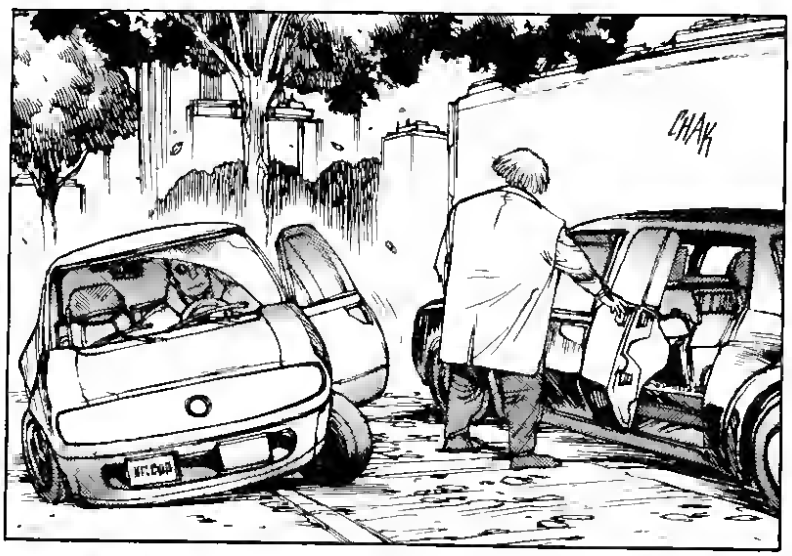
YOU'VE GOT TO LOSE THE MEMBER OF YOUR TEAM WHO WAS DIRECTLY INVOLVED.

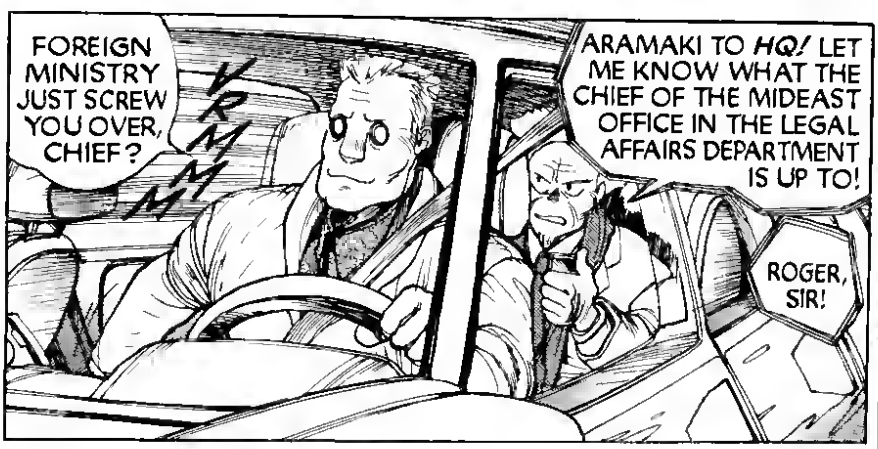
WHAT?! YOU'RE TELLING ME TO GIVE UP ONE OF MY MOST TALENTED PEOPLE? SOMEONE MORE PRECIOUS THAN AN ESPER?!
AND I'D LOSE HER ENTIRE INFONET, TOO!

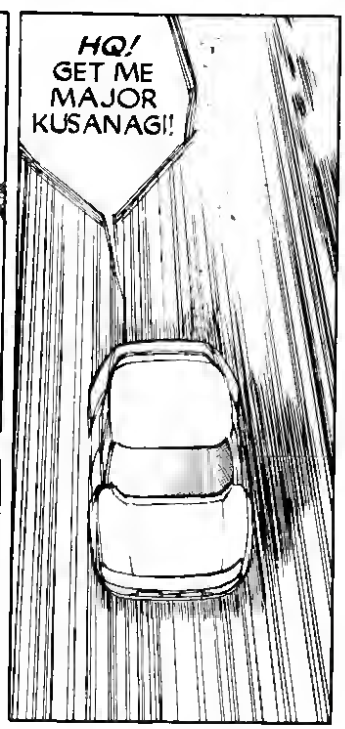
I'M WARNING YOU AS A FRIEND, ARAMAKI.

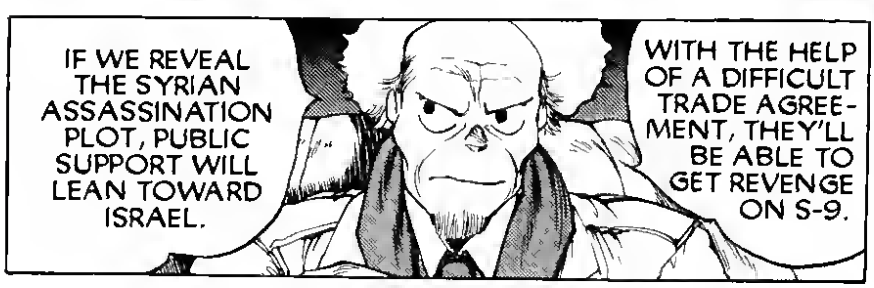

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE PARLIAMENT PASS A LAW RESTRICTING THE SPECIAL FORCES, YOU'VE GOT TO ACCEPT THE IDEA OF HER BEING CHARGED WITH MANSLAUGHTER IN THE LINE OF DUTY.
THROW THE MASS MEDIA THIS BONE. THE PUBLIC'LL BE CONVINCED THEY WERE RIGHT ALL ALONG AND LOVE IT, AND SECTION NINE WILL DODGE THE BULLET.

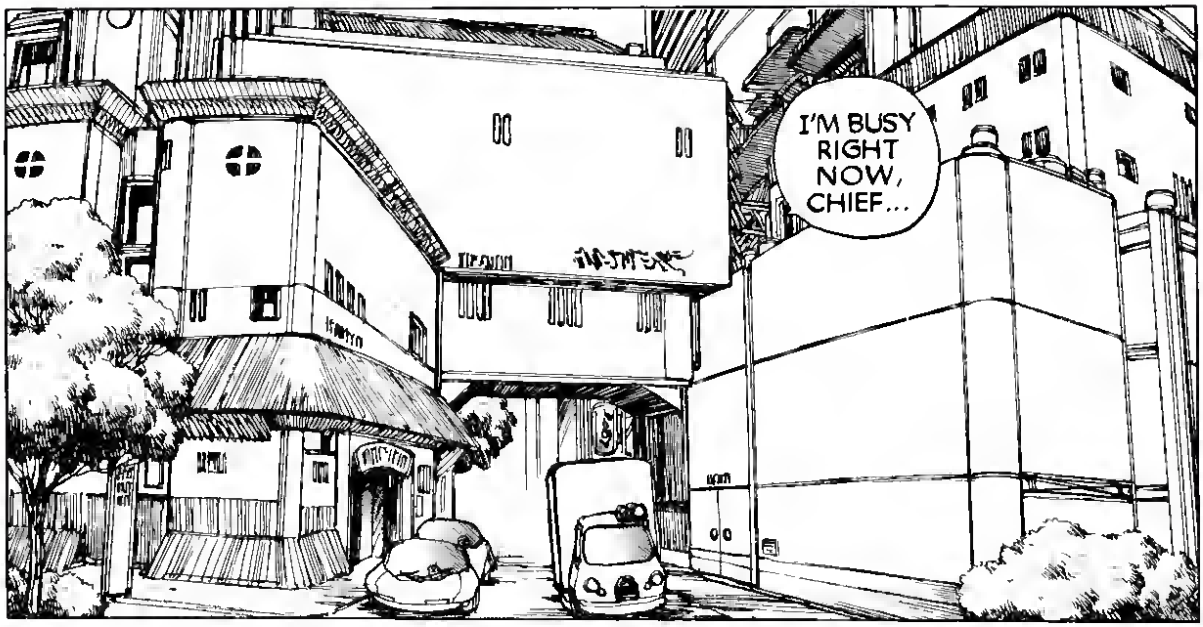
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU WANT TO ASK ME SOME-THING...
...BUT I CAN'T TELL YOU WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW. SORRY ABOUT THAT, ARAMAKI.


CHAK

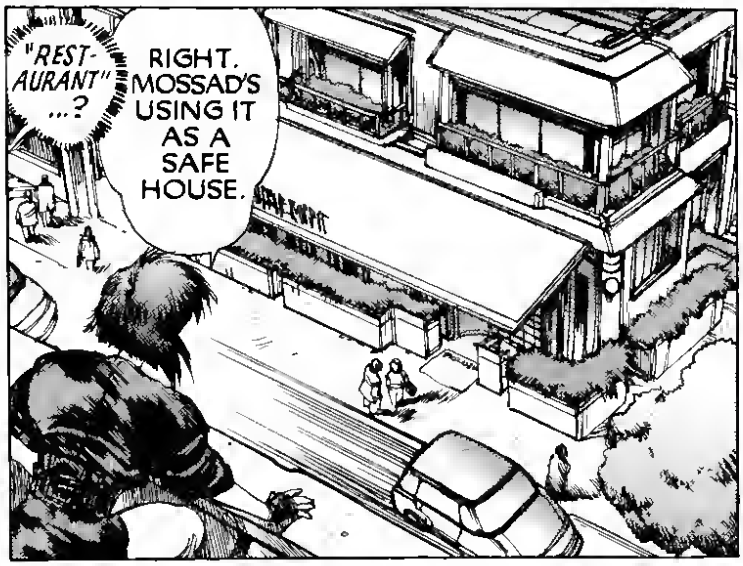

FOREIGN MINISTRY JUST SCREW YOU OVER, CHIEF?
VRMM
ARAMAKI TO *HQ!* LET ME KNOW WHAT THE CHIEF OF THE MIDEAST OFFICE IN THE LEGAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT IS UP TO!
ROGER, SIR!


*HQ!* GET ME MAJOR KUSANAGI!

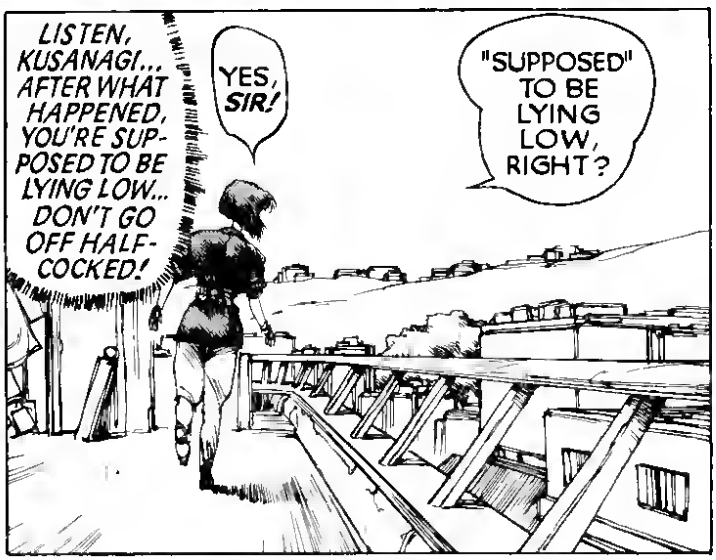

IF WE REVEAL THE SYRIAN ASSASSINATION PLOT, PUBLIC SUPPORT WILL LEAN TOWARD ISRAEL.
WITH THE HELP OF A DIFFICULT TRADE AGREE-MENT, THEY'LL BE ABLE TO GET REVENGE ON S-9.


I'M BUSY RIGHT NOW, CHIEF...

SO YOU THINK IT'S MOSSAD, TOO?
WELL, I'M NOT GOING INTO THE RESTAURANT 'TIL I'VE CHECKED TO SEE IF ANYONE'S GOT IT STAKED OUT, ANYWAY.

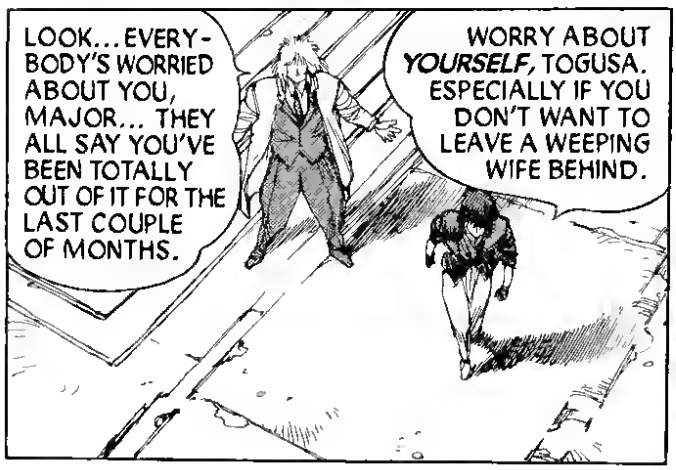

"RESTAURANT"...?
RIGHT. MOSSAD'S USING IT AS A SAFE HOUSE.

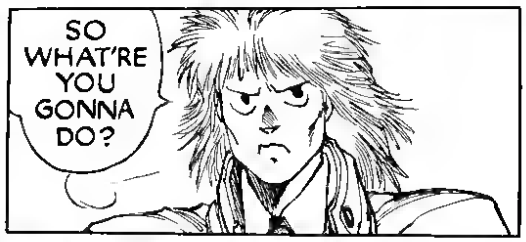
HEY... JAPAN'S BEEN LEANING TOWARD THE ARABS BECAUSE OF OIL--SO FOR ISRAEL, THE IDEA OF LANDING A CAPITAL INVESTMENT WORTH SEVERAL TRILLION YEN IS AWFULLY TEMPTING.
THEY'VE PROBABLY BEEN EVEN MORE MOTIVATED THAN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

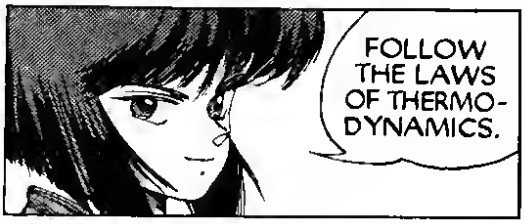

LISTEN, KUSANAGI... AFTER WHAT HAPPENED, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE LYING LOW... DON'T GO OFF HALF-COCKED!
YES, SIR!
"SUPPOSED" TO BE LYING LOW, RIGHT?

HEY, TOGUSA-- YOU LOSE YOUR TEXT-BOOK?

YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS WHEN THE CHIEF TELLS YOU TO TAIL ME, RIGHT?
WHY ME, LORD?


LOOK... EVERY-BODY'S WORRIED ABOUT YOU, MAJOR... THEY ALL SAY YOU'VE BEEN TOTALLY OUT OF IT FOR THE LAST COUPLE OF MONTHS.
WORRY ABOUT *YOURSELF,* TOGUSA. ESPECIALLY IF YOU DON'T WANT TO LEAVE A WEEPING WIFE BEHIND.


SO WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO?

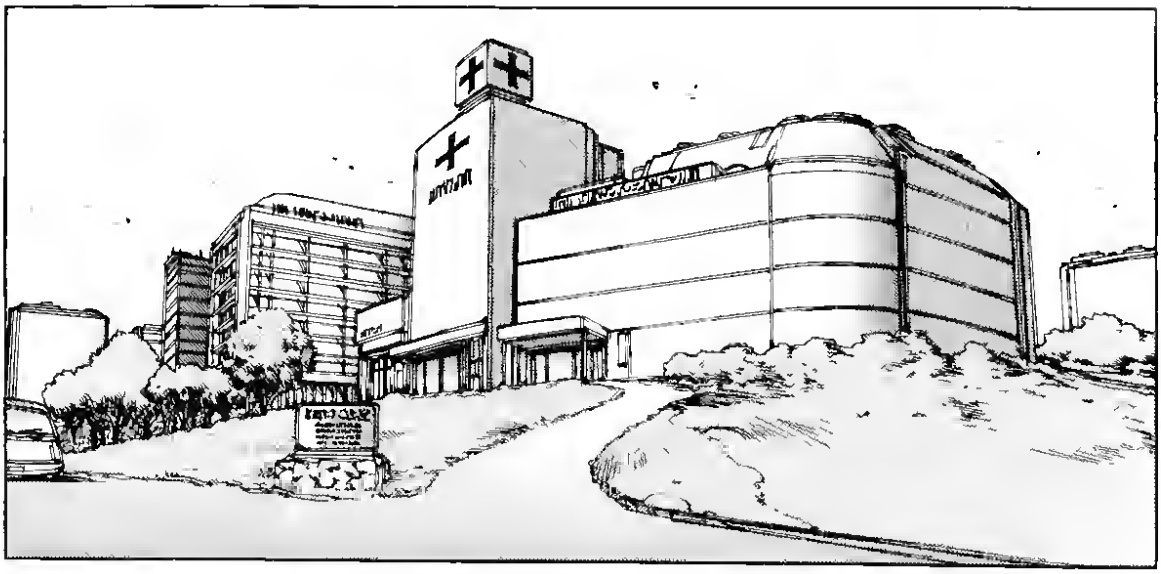

FOLLOW THE LAWS OF THERMO-DYNAMICS.

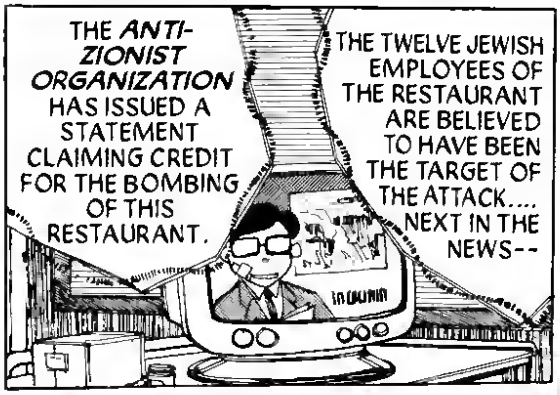
FIRST OF ALL, I PLAN TO RENEW MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH AN OLD FRIEND WHO'S INFILTRATED MOSSAD.

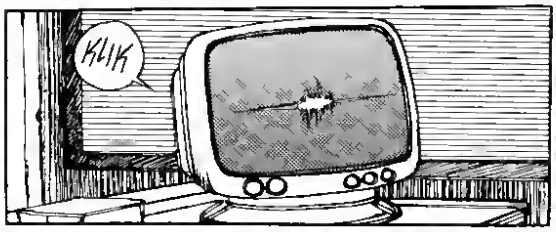
AN "OLD FRIEND" ...?
RIGHT. *SHAPIRO,* A RUSSIAN JEW FROM THE K.G.B.

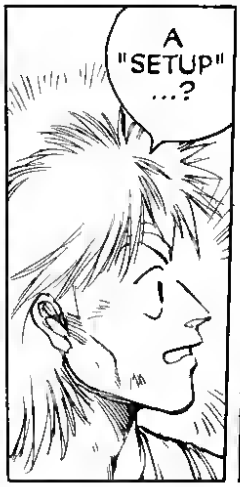
!
WHUMP
SHAPIRO?!
WHAT TH--?!
BOOM

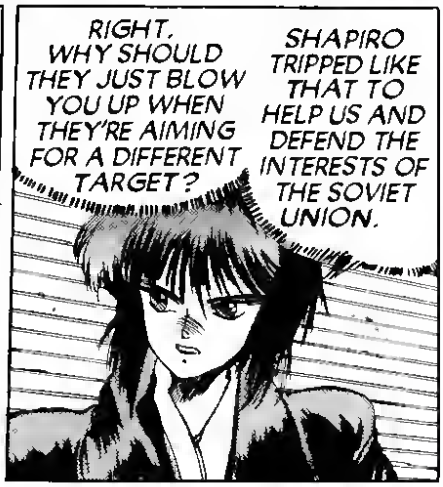
FWHOOSH
KRAK
FWUD
WHOK
VRMMM







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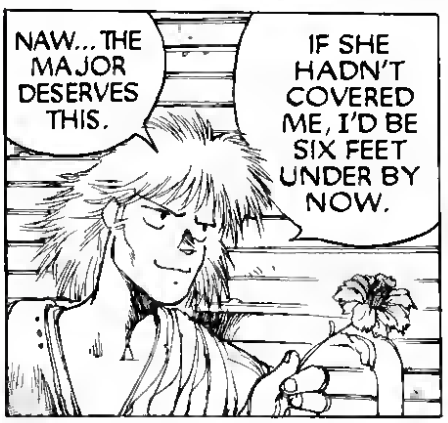
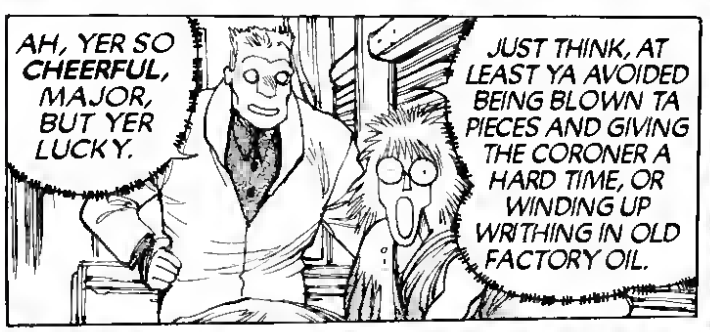
HE'S BEEN REAL NICE TO US EVER SINCE THAT CASE ON ETOROFU.
ANOTHER COUPLE OF STEPS AND MY INORGANIC LUNGS WOULD HAVE BREATHED FIRE--
YO! TOGUSA! MY MAIN MAN! YA TRIPPED AND BUSTED YER COLLAR-BONE, EH?
NYA-HA-HA-HA!

SO YER UNTALENTED, UNLUCKY, AND WITH-OUT ANYTHING TO SHOW FOR IT ALL, EH?
HERE HAVE A SAZANQUA
WHA--?!

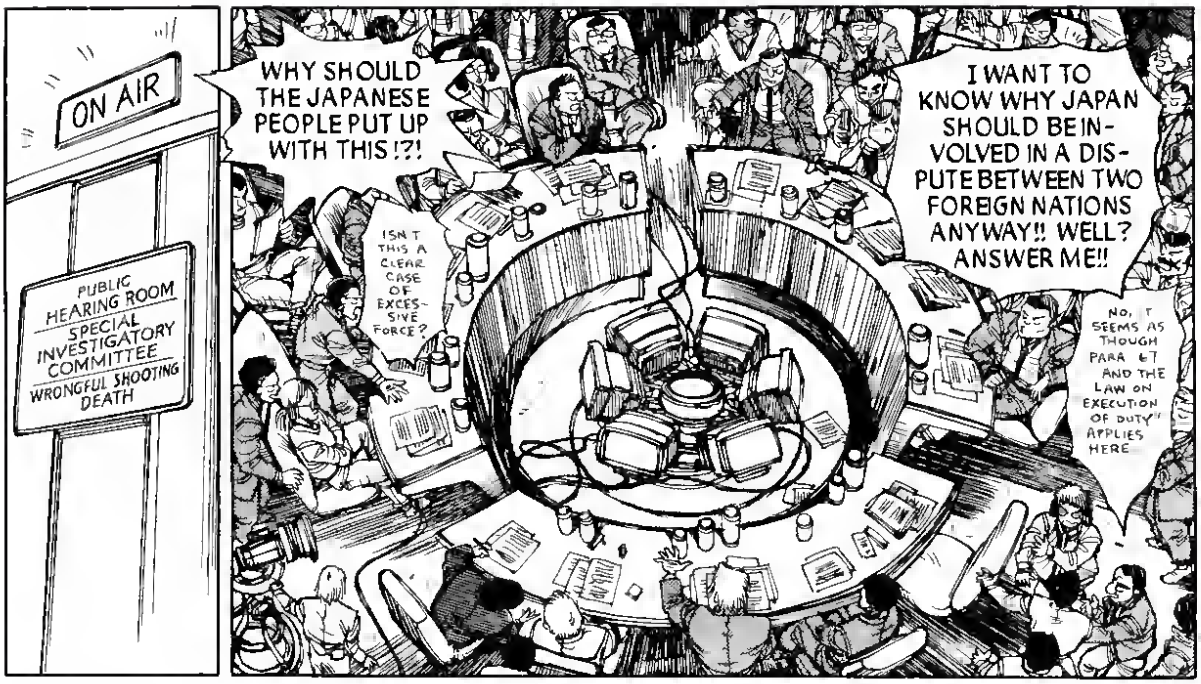

NAW... THE MAJOR DESERVES THIS.
IF SHE HADN'T COVERED ME, I'D BE SIX FEET UNDER BY NOW.

EVEN THOUGH YOUR BONES ARE BROKEN BECAUSE OF MY CON-FUSION?
LIKE THEY SAY, TOGUSA, "YOUR WIFE'LL WEEP FOR YOU ONE DAY, AND THE SOONER THAT DAY COMES, THE EASIER IT'LL BE FOR HER TO START OVER."

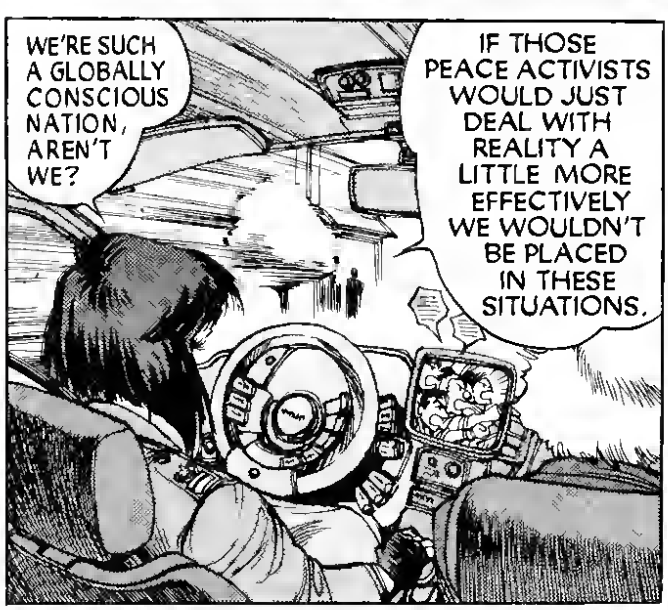

AH, YER SO CHEERFUL, MAJOR, BUT YER LUCKY.
JUST THINK, AT LEAST YA AVOIDED BEING BLOWN TA PIECES AND GIVING THE CORONER A HARD TIME, OR WINDING UP WRITHING IN OLD FACTORY OIL.

AT LEAST UNTIL A MORE AP-PROPRIATE TIME, YA KNOW?
YOU DON'T HAVE SOME KIND OF DEATH WISH, DO YA...?

AT LEAST YA DIDN'T WANT TO BE KILLED BY A PUNK AT DAWN ON THE DECK OF THAT BOAT...

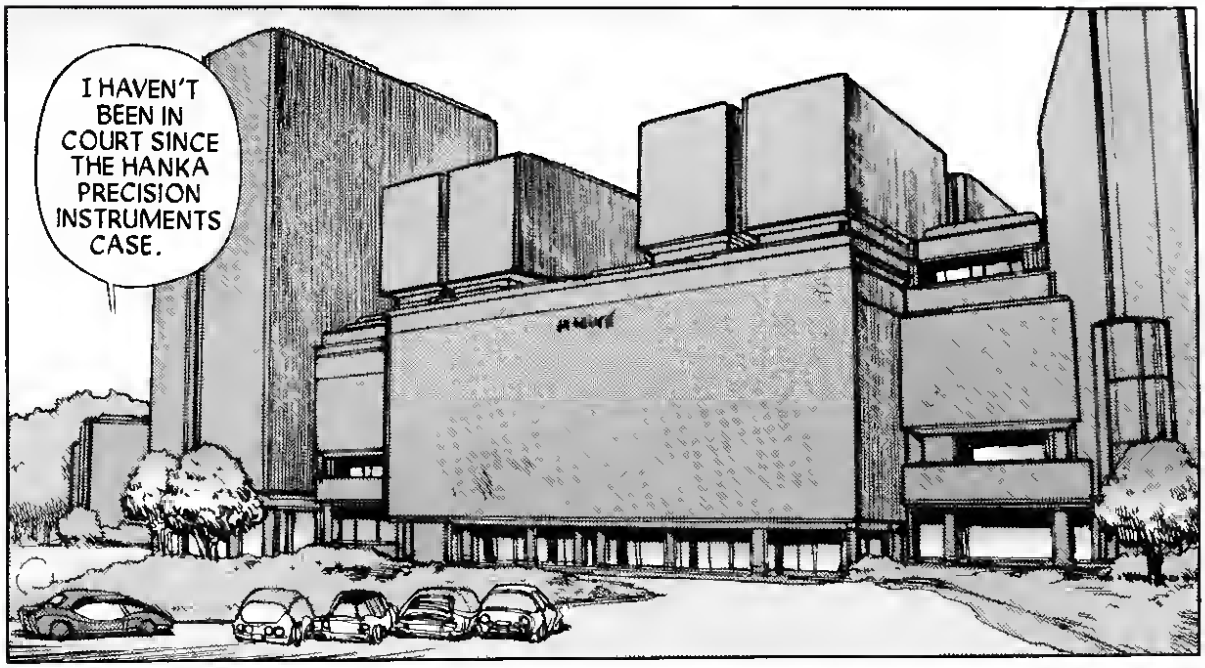

ON AIR
PUBLIC HEARING ROOM
SPECIAL INVESTIGATORY COMMITTEE
WRONGFUL SHOOTING DEATH
WHY SHOULD THE JAPANESE PEOPLE PUT UP WITH THIS!?!
ISN'T THIS A CLEAR CASE OF EXCESSIVE FORCE?
I WANT TO KNOW WHY JAPAN SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN A DISPUTE BETWEEN TWO FOREIGN NATIONS ANYWAY!! WELL? ANSWER ME!!
NO, IT SEEMS AS THOUGH PARA 67 AND THE LAW ON EXECUTION OF DUTY" APPLIES HERE

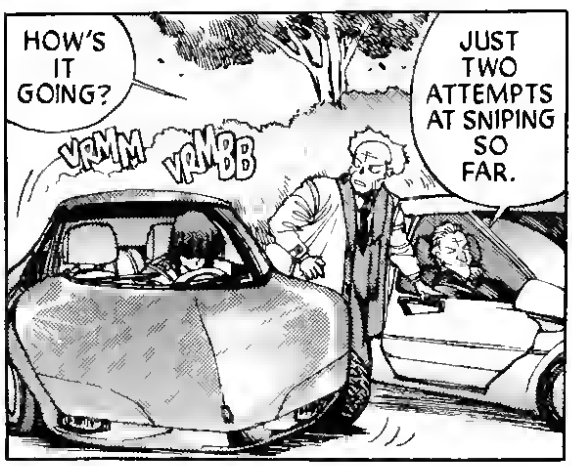
OUR COUNTRY MAY BE DOING WELL, BUT THE STRUGGLE IN THE MIDEAST IS SUFFOCATING MANY ALREADY IMPOVERISHED NATIONS. WE CAN'T IGNORE THEIR PROBLEMS!
BUT SYRIA'S ISSUED A FORMAL DENIAL...
THE COPS ARE CORRUPT...
IF THEY WEREN'T SO TRIGGER-HAPPY IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM PEACEFULLY...
WHY ISRAEL NOW?
THE GOVERNMENT'S UP TO NO GOOD AGAIN!
I'D LIKE TO SEE *YOU* SQUARE OFF AGAINST AN ARMED CRIMINAL AND RESOLVE THE SITUATION PEACEFULLY!
HEY, ASSASSINS ARE HUMAN BEINGS, TOO!
NO, THEY'RE GORILLAS!


WE'RE SUCH A GLOBALLY CONSCIOUS NATION, AREN'T WE?
IF THOSE PEACE ACTIVISTS WOULD JUST DEAL WITH REALITY A LITTLE MORE EFFECTIVELY WE WOULDN'T BE PLACED IN THESE SITUATIONS.

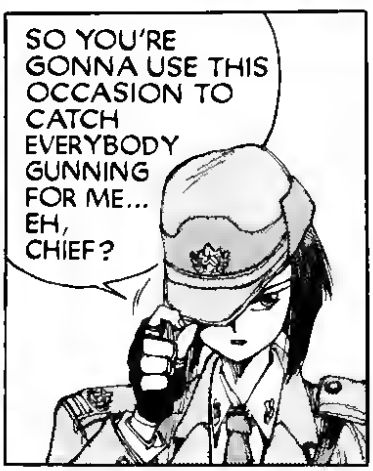
THEY'RE JUST LIKE US. THEY HATE VIOLENCE...

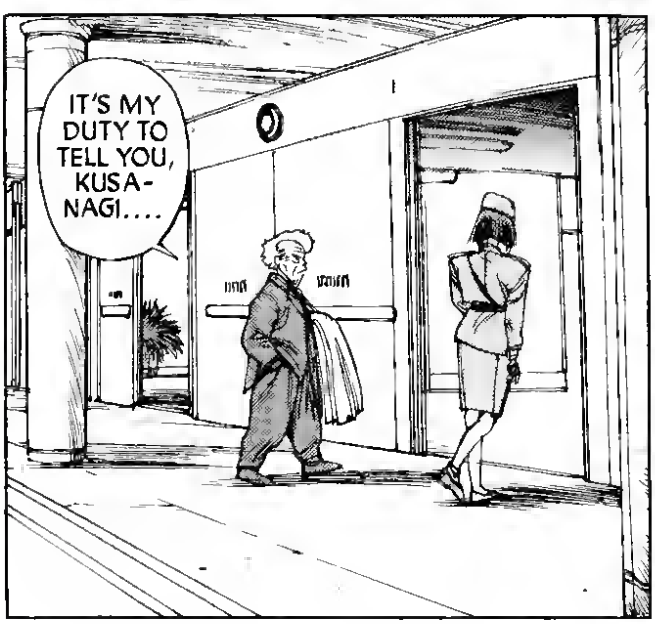
THEY'RE SO HYPOCRITICAL.
EMPHASIZING A LIFESTYLE BASED ON CONSUMPTION IS THE *ULTIMATE* VIOLENCE AGAINST POOR COUNTRIES.

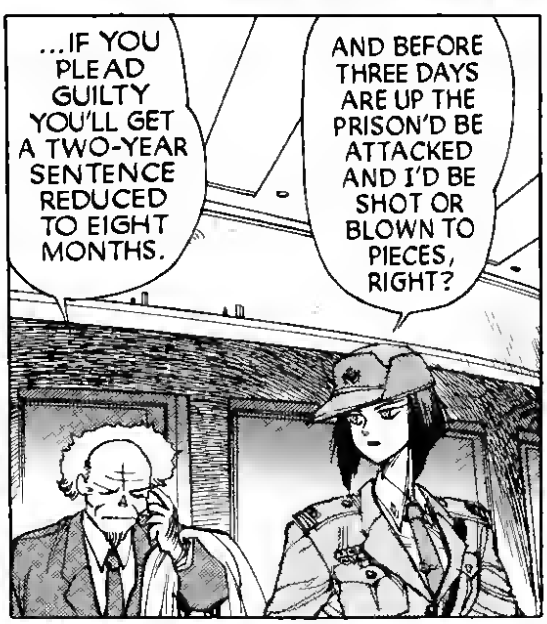

I HAVEN'T BEEN IN COURT SINCE THE HANKA PRECISION INSTRUMENTS CASE.

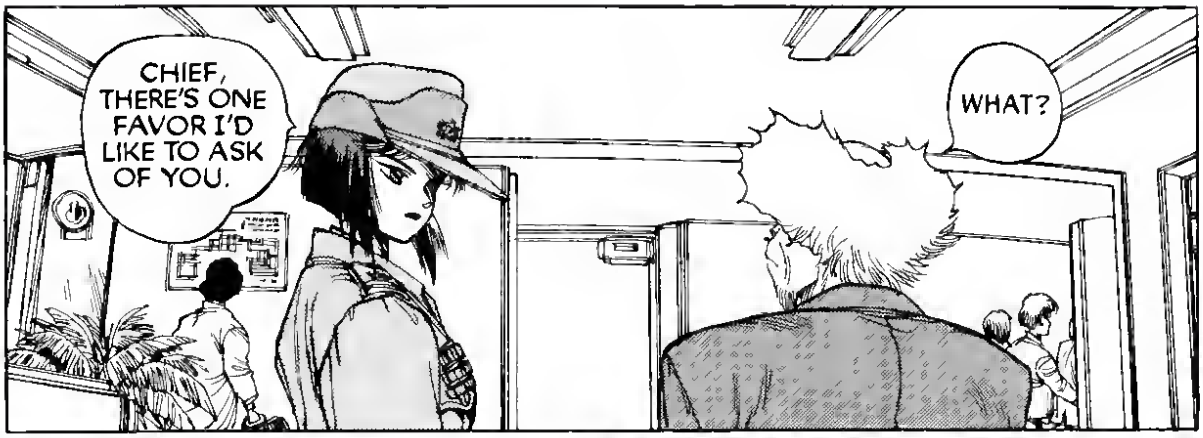

HOW'S IT GOING?
VRMM
VRMBB
JUST TWO ATTEMPTS AT SNIPING SO FAR.

AT THIS STAGE, ONLY THE SMALL FRY'LL SHOW THEIR FACES-- BE CAREFUL!


SO YOU'RE GONNA USE THIS OCCASION TO CATCH EVERYBODY GUNNING FOR ME... EH, CHIEF?

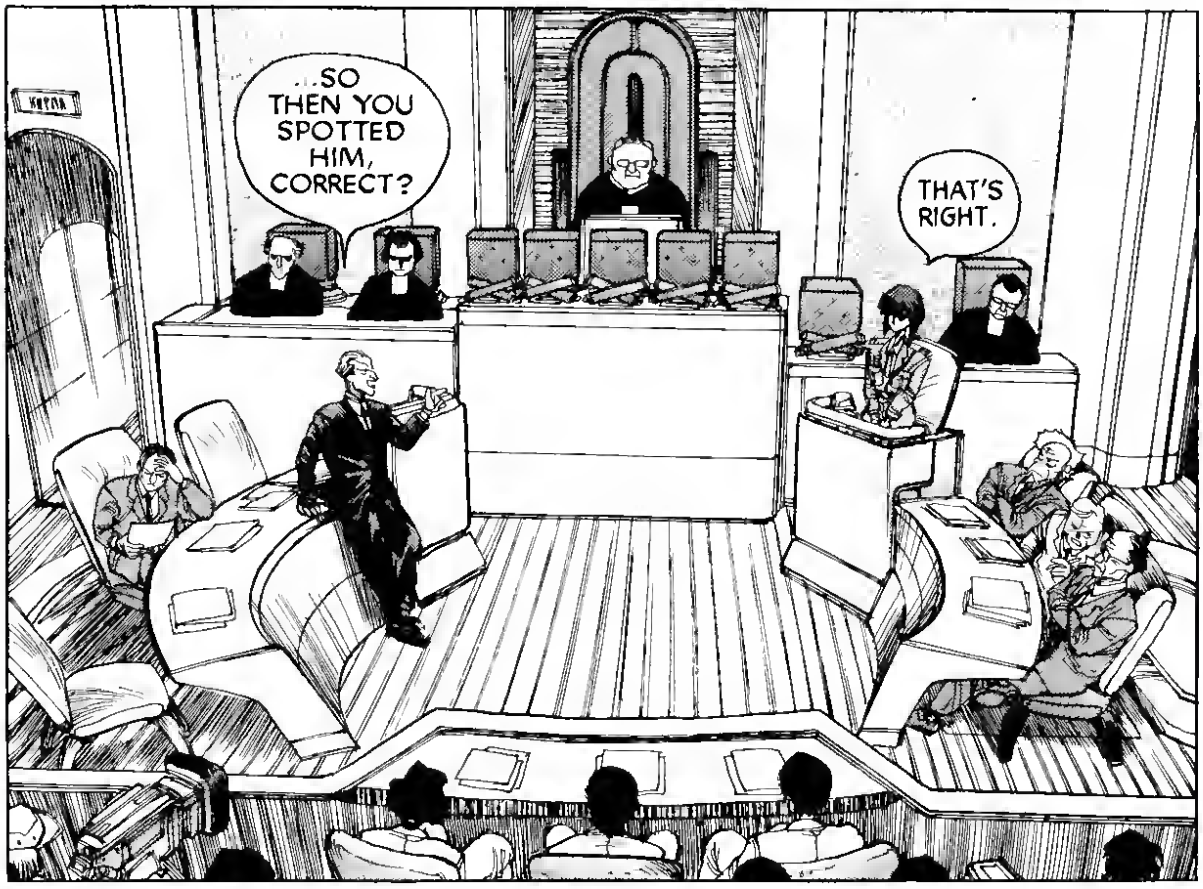

IT'S MY DUTY TO TELL YOU, KUSA-NAGI....

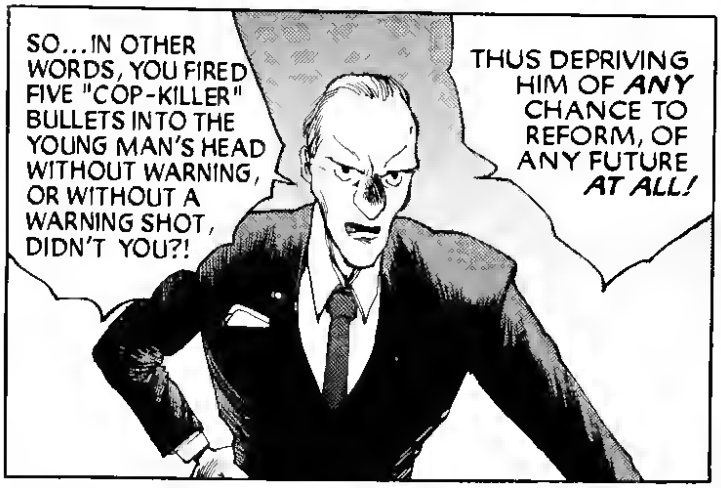

...IF YOU PLEAD GUILTY YOU'LL GET A TWO-YEAR SENTENCE REDUCED TO EIGHT MONTHS.
AND BEFORE THREE DAYS ARE UP THE PRISON'D BE ATTACKED AND I'D BE SHOT OR BLOWN TO PIECES, RIGHT?

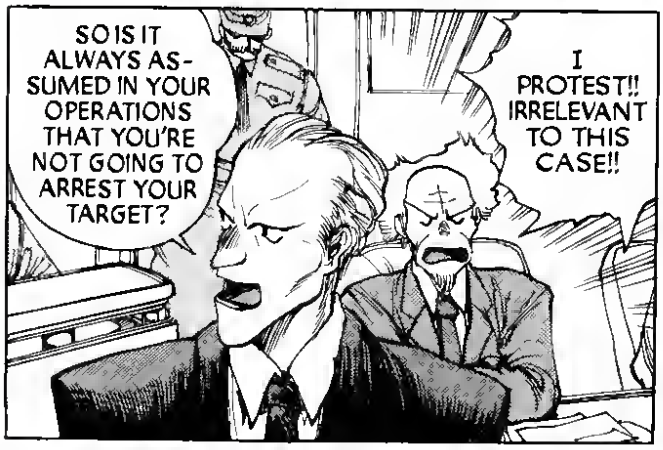

CHIEF, THERE'S ONE FAVOR I'D LIKE TO ASK OF YOU.
WHAT?

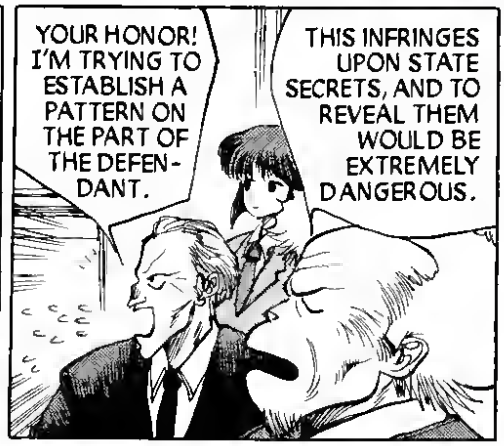
IF I SHOULD DIE FOR SOME REASON, I WANT YOU TO LEAVE MY RADIO PAGING CHANNEL OPEN.

....
IT'S A PROMISE.


...SO THEN YOU SPOTTED HIM, CORRECT?
THAT'S RIGHT.



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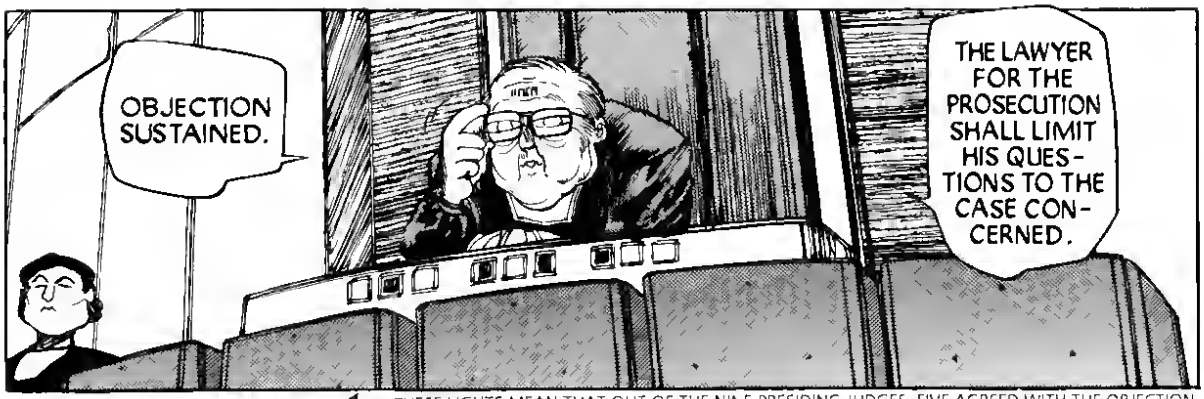
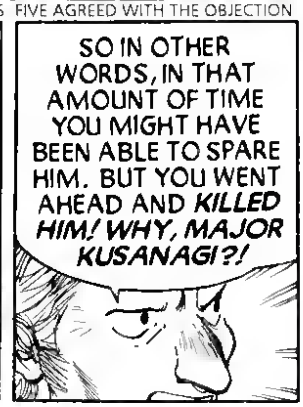
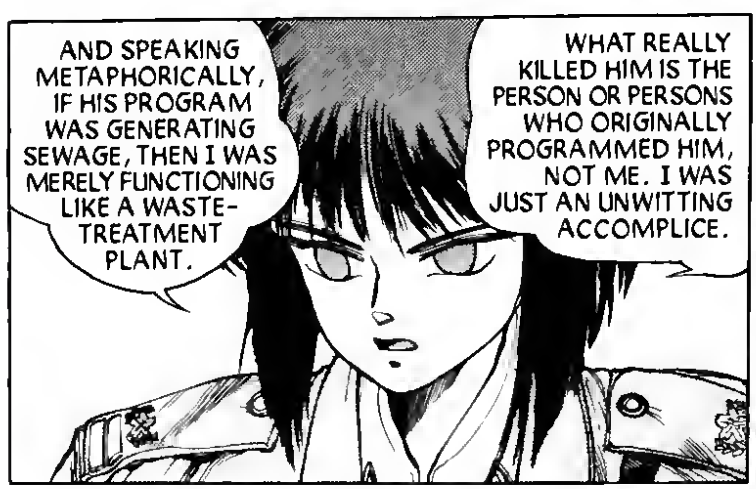


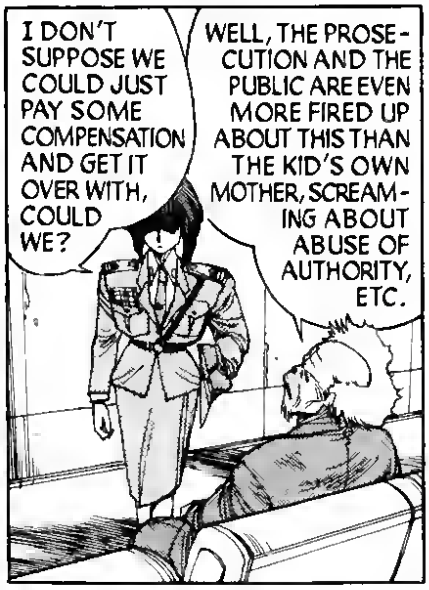

THESE LIGHTS MEAN THAT OUT OF THE NINE PRESIDING JUDGES FIVE AGREED WITH THE OBJECTION

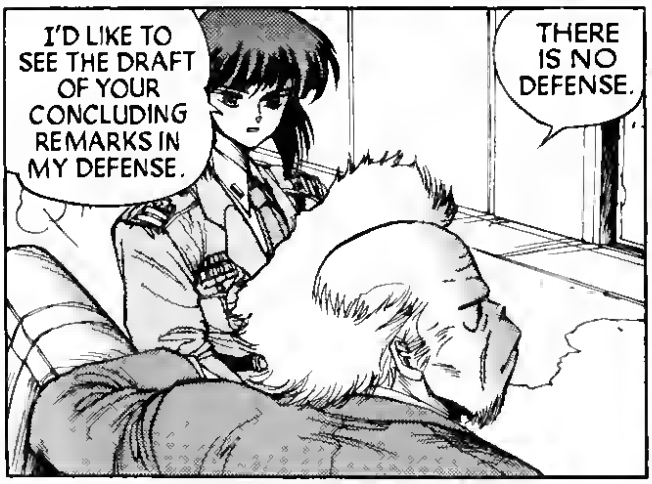




IT WAS A SUNSET LIKE THIS WHEN I FIRST MET YOU, CHIEF...

I WONDER HOW LONG IT'LL TAKE FOR THE TV JURY TO CAST ITS INTERIM VOTE?
I HEAR IT TAKES AROUND 12 MINUTES, OUT OF A 15-MINUTE RECESS.


I DON'T SUPPOSE WE COULD JUST PAY SOME COMPENSATION AND GET IT OVER WITH, COULD WE?
WELL, THE PROSECUTION AND THE PUBLIC ARE EVEN MORE FIRED UP ABOUT THIS THAN THE KID'S OWN MOTHER, SCREAMING ABOUT ABUSE OF AUTHORITY, ETC.

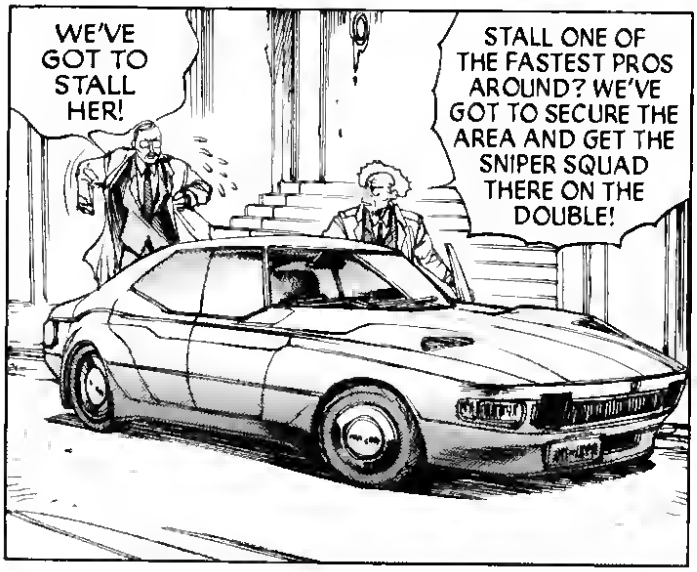

I'D LIKE TO SEE THE DRAFT OF YOUR CONCLUDING REMARKS IN MY DEFENSE.
THERE IS NO DEFENSE.

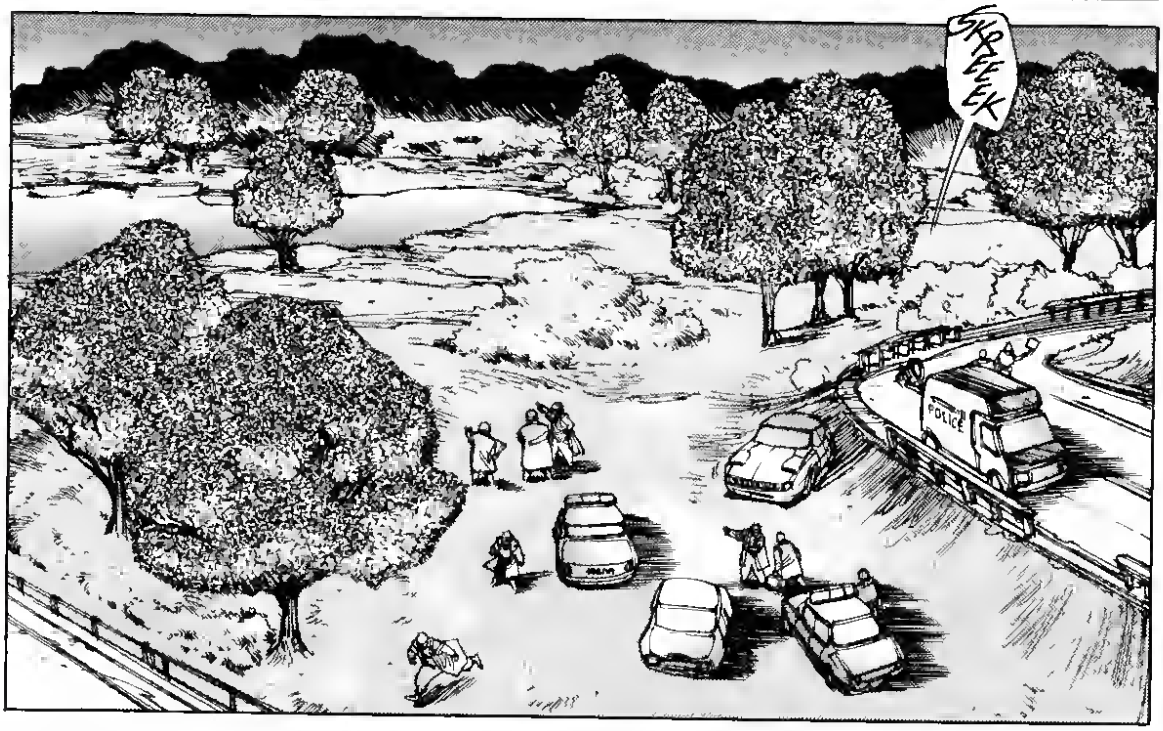
IS THERE?

TIME FOR ME TO HIT THE MEN'S ROOM. BE RIGHT BACK.
CHIEF, YOU'RE SUCH AN ANACHRO-NISM.
BATOU! WHAT'S HAPPEN-ING?!
VRRMMM
hee hee
IN LESS THAN TWO MINUTES I'LL BE AT YOUR NO. 3 SAFE HOUSE...
I NEED A FULL SET OF SPARE PARTS FOR MY BODY!!
AND DON'T FORGET TO BRING MY GREEN EMERGENCY CASE!
NO SWEAT!
YER PLANNING TO SKIP OUT, EH?
SOME-THING LIKE THAT...

SO, ARAMAKI...
WHAT KIND OF PLAN *IS* THIS, ANYWAY?
*Hrrmph!*
THE MIDEAST SECTION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S PLANNING TO FILE A PROTEST USING THE PLEA GIVEN IN THE DIET.
THEY'RE TEAMING UP WITH THE OPPOSITION PARTIES, AND THREATENING TO DESTROY THE CREDIBILITY OF THE CABINET.
WE *NEED* TO KNOW WHAT YOUR STRATEGY IS!
ANY AGENT WHO RUNS FROM A COURT OF LAW SHOULD BE BROUGHT BACK IN BY SECTION NINE!
ACCORDING TO YOUR REPORT, KUSANAGI'S EMOTIONALLY UNSTABLE, AND CURRENTLY SUSPENDED FROM DUTY.
WHO'S GOING TO BUY THAT AT A TIME LIKE THIS?!!
IF YOU DON'T GET HER BACK HERE IMMEDIATELY, I'LL SEE YOU INDICTED FOR TREASON, ARAMAKI!
YOU SUMMONED ME HERE JUST TO TELL ME THAT?
EXCUSE ME, GENTLEMEN, BUT I'VE GOT AN INVESTIGATION TO CONDUCT.

SO HOW IS THE INVESTIGATION GOING?
KUSANAGI SAYS THE SYRIAN ASSASSINATION PLAN, THE SUPPLY OF WEAPONS, THE INVOLVEMENT OF *S-9*, THE VIDEO LEAK OF THE ATTACK, AND THE TERRORISM-- *EVERYTHING* EXCEPT THE SHOOTING ITSELF-- IS AN ISRAELI OP.
SHE SAYS SHE'S GOING TO SUPPLY PROOF, BUT SHE'S SUPPOSED TO VISIT A FACE ARTIST FIRST, SO I'LL PUT OUT A DRAGNET ON HER.
MR. KATAGIRI...
...I KNOW PUBLIC SECURITY'S TAILING ME, SO I'LL SAVE YOU SOME TIME! COME ALONG!
REPORT BACK TO ME *DIRECTLY*, KATAGIRI!
YESSIR!
I FIGURED YOU KNEW WE WERE TAILING YOU.
OF COURSE I KNEW. HELL, I HELPED SET IT UP THIS WAY.
SAITO TO CHIEF!
COME IN, SAITO.
I'M AT THE STUDIO OF *CHEV MUDOUMA*, THE FACE ARTIST.
ACCORDING TO A NOTE LEFT HERE FOR US BY THE MAJOR, SHE'S KIDNAPPED MUDOUMA.



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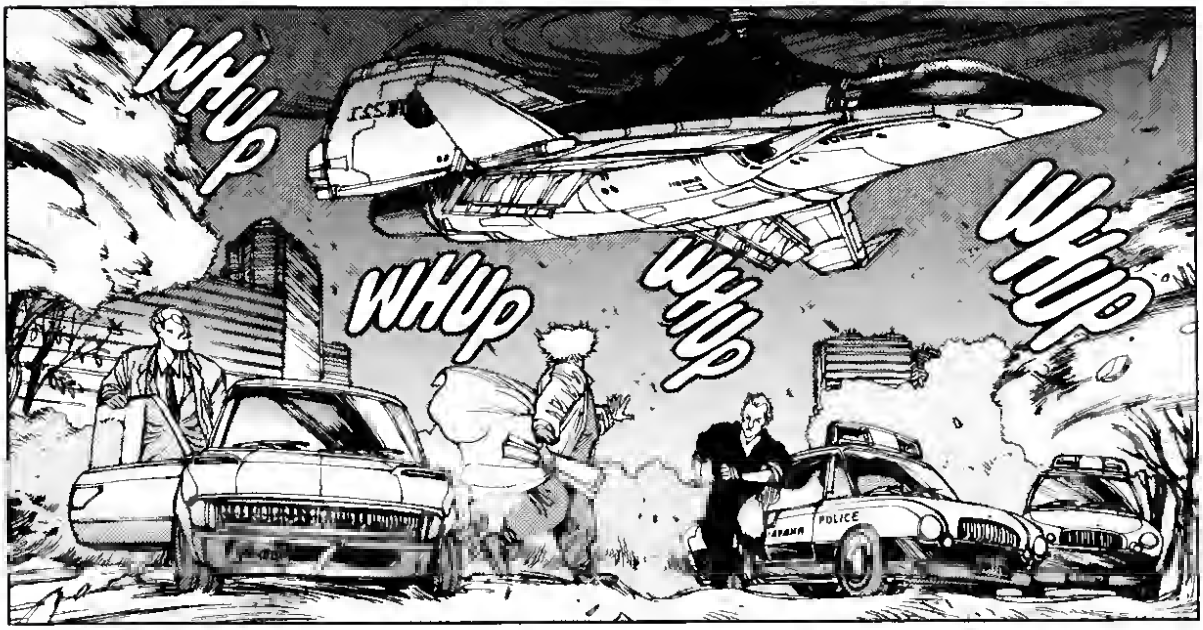
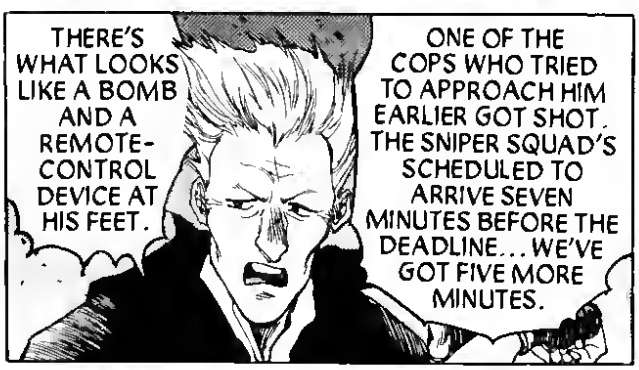
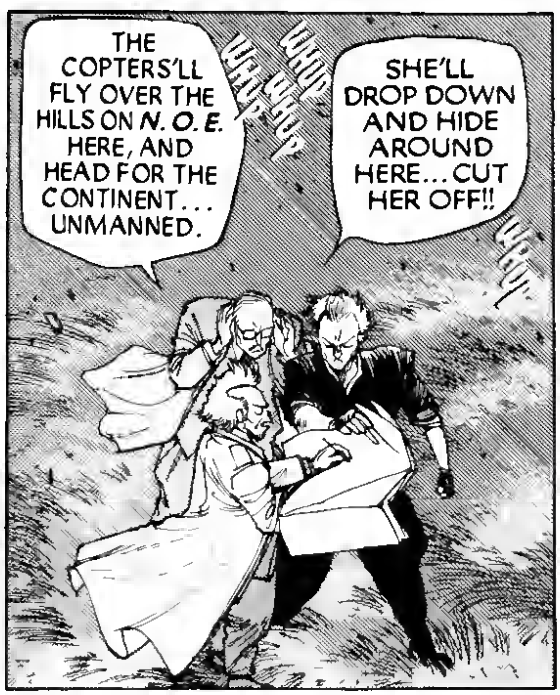

WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
POLICE

WHAT'S GOING ON?
THE HOSTAGE IS OVER THERE, SIR...
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP

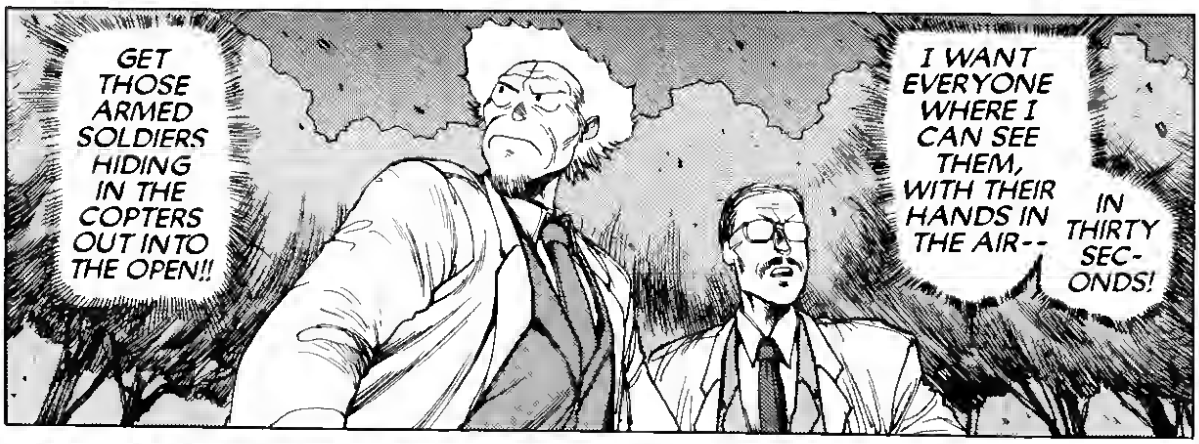

THERE'S WHAT LOOKS LIKE A BOMB AND A REMOTE-CONTROL DEVICE AT HIS FEET.
ONE OF THE COPS WHO TRIED TO APPROACH HIM EARLIER GOT SHOT. THE SNIPER SQUAD'S SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE SEVEN MINUTES BEFORE THE DEADLINE... WE'VE GOT FIVE MORE MINUTES.

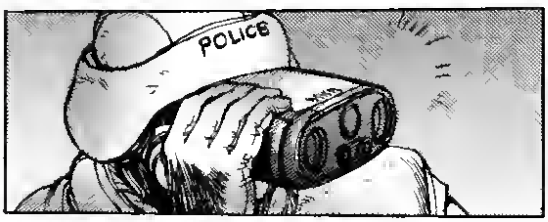
THAT ONLY GIVES US ONLY TWO MINUTES LEEWAY!
THAT MEANS OUR MOVEMENTS ARE TAKING TWO MINUTES MORE THAN SHE PLANNED.

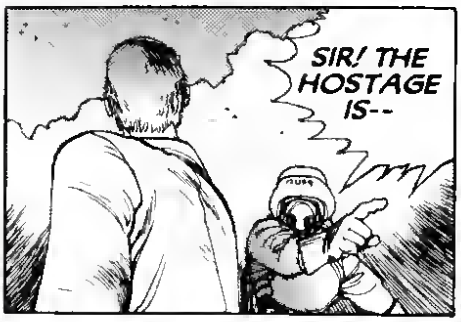

THE COPTERS'LL FLY OVER THE HILLS ON *N. O. E.* HERE, AND HEAD FOR THE CONTINENT... UNMANNED.
SHE'LL DROP DOWN AND HIDE AROUND HERE... CUT HER OFF!!
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP

CHIEF!!
IT'S HER!

TRACK THE TRANS-MISSION SOURCE!

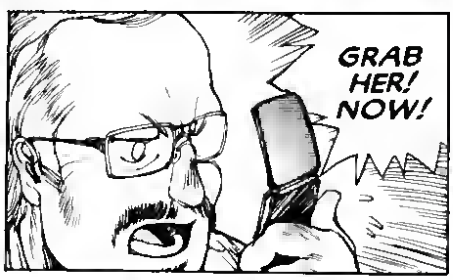

GET THOSE ARMED SOLDIERS HIDING IN THE COPTERS OUT INTO THE OPEN!!
I WANT EVERYONE WHERE I CAN SEE THEM, WITH THEIR HANDS IN THE AIR--
IN THIRTY SEC-ONDS!

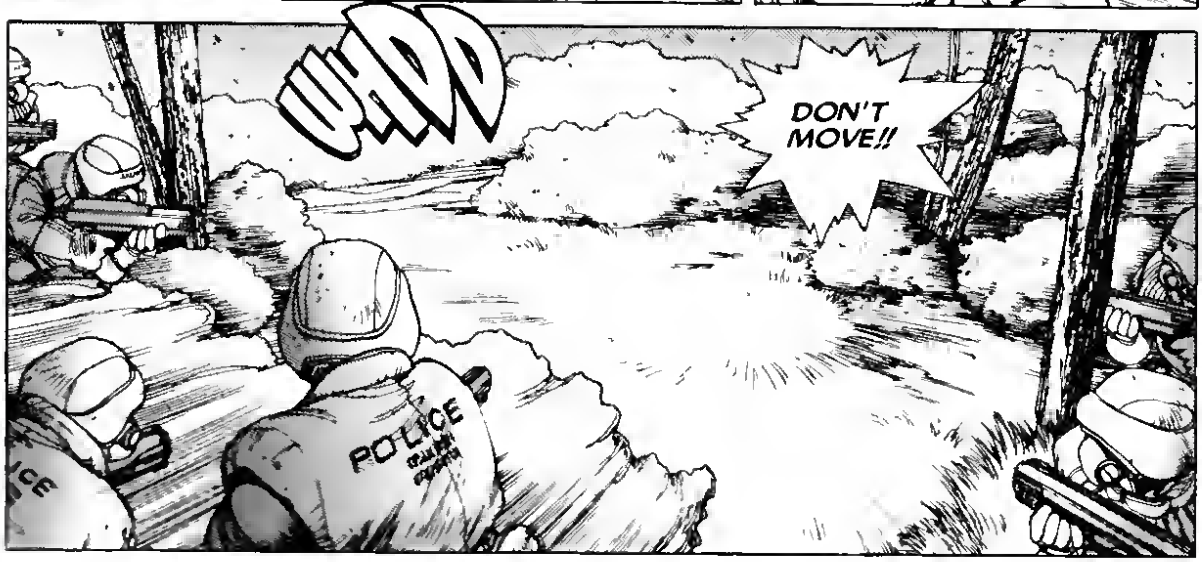

POLICE

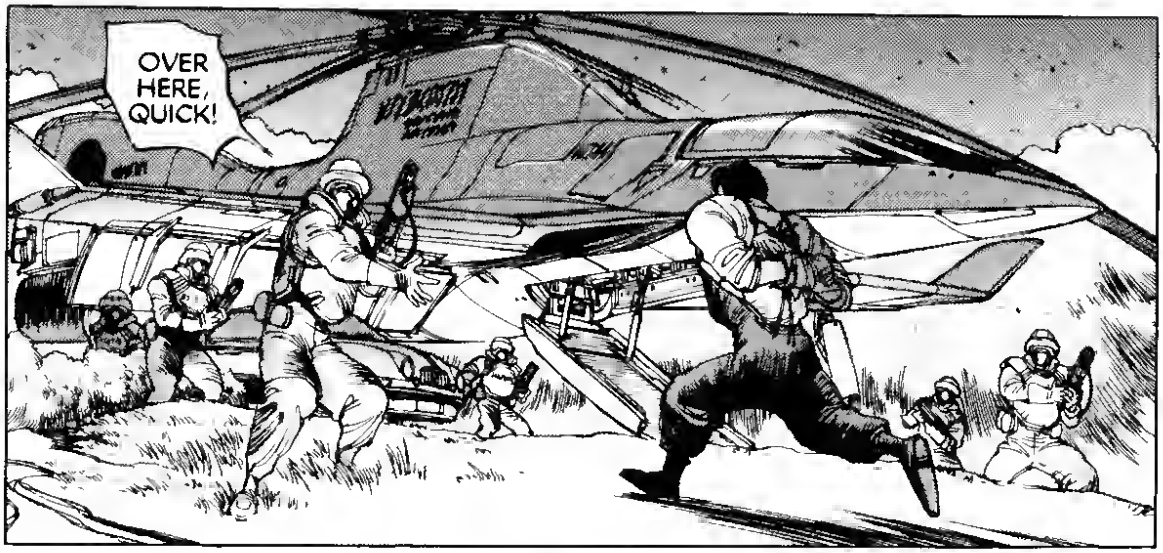

SIR! THE HOSTAGE IS--

WH--?!

SNK
FUWAP


GRAB HER! NOW!


UHDD
DON'T MOVE!!
POLICE



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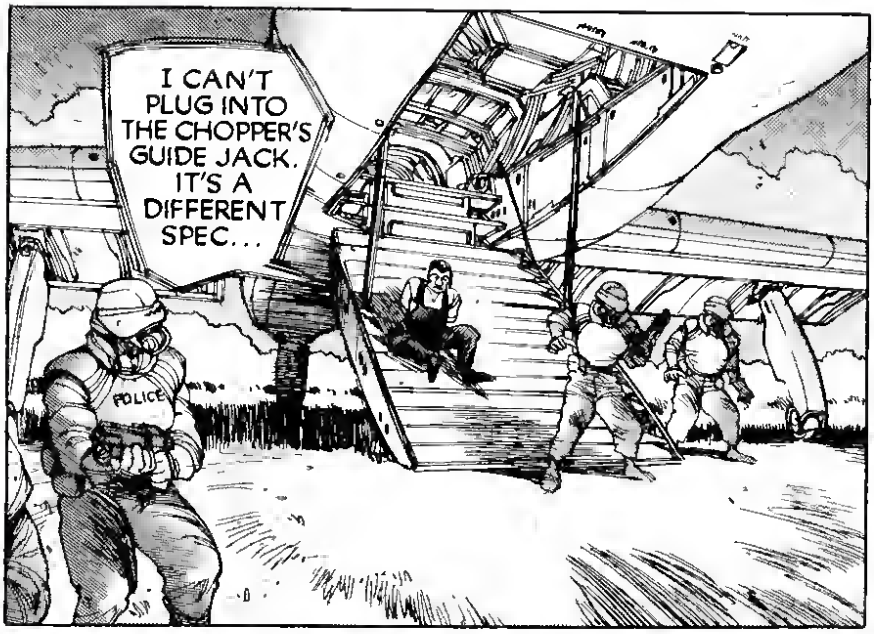
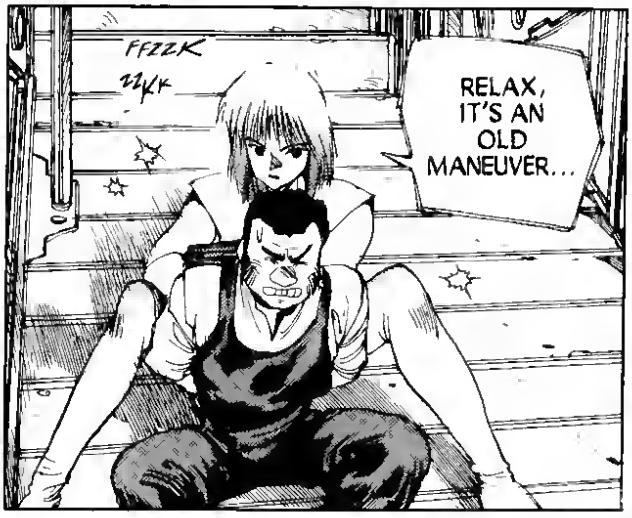

I CAN'T PLUG INTO THE CHOPPER'S GUIDE JACK. IT'S A DIFFERENT SPEC...
POLICE

SHIT!
POLICE


FFZZK
RELAX, IT'S AN OLD MANEUVER...

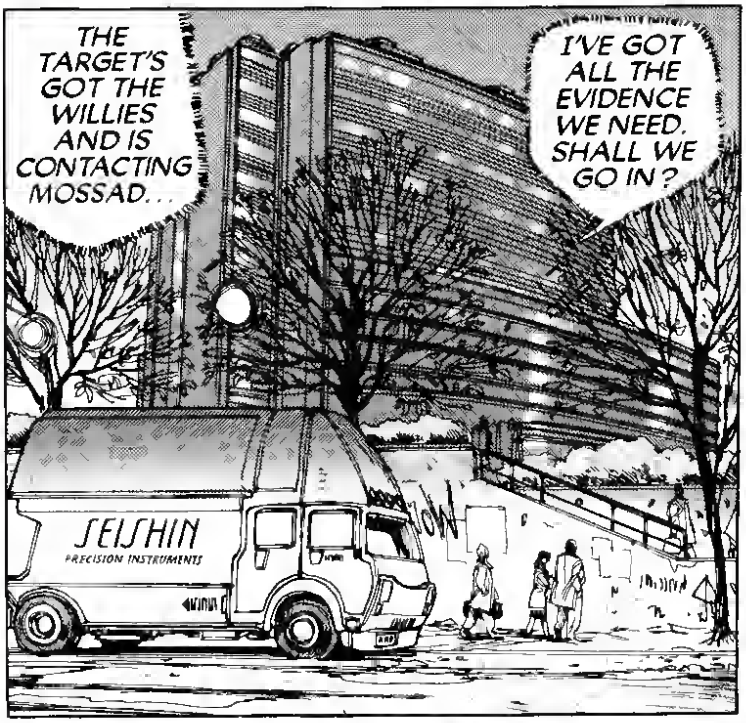
THE SNIPER SQUAD'S HERE, SIR...
POLICE

THE MEDIA'S WATCHING WITH TELE-PHOTO LENSES. I'LL GIVE YOU 30 SECONDS.

BRING ME THE CONNEC-TION ADAPTER RIGHT NOW!!
I KNOW SOME-BODY TOOK IT OUT OF THE COPTER.

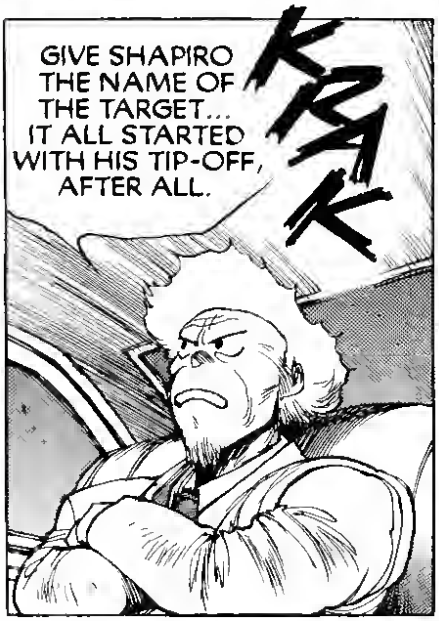
HEY, SHE'S ONE OF YOUR PEOPLE, RIGHT?
ONE OF MY FORMER PEOPLE. STALLING FOR TIME ISN'T GOING TO WORK, KATAGIRI. THE BEST THING TO DO IS TO LET HER FLEE, AND THEN WHEN SHE'S CLEAR OF THE HOSTAGE, GRAB HER.

beep
CHIEF !!
WHAT?


THE TARGET'S GOT THE WILLIES AND IS CONTACTING MOSSAD...
I'VE GOT ALL THE EVIDENCE WE NEED. SHALL WE GO IN?
SEISHIN
PRECISION INSTRUMENTS

NO. HANDS OFF FOR NOW.
ONCE YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH INFORMATION, GET OUT OF THERE, AND DON'T LEAVE ANY TRACKS!

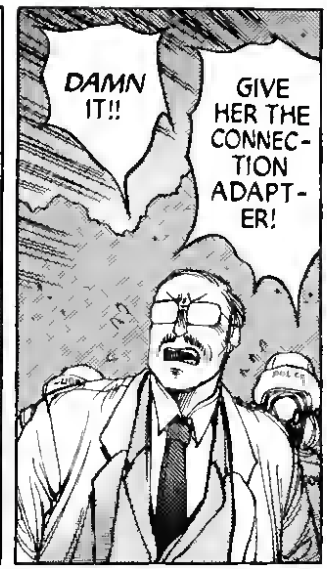
BUT CHIEF! THEY CUT A DEAL WITH ONE OF THE GUYS ON THE SNIPER SQUAD TO ELIMINATE MAJOR KUSANAGI!
DON'T LET ANYONE SEE YOU, ISHIKAWA!

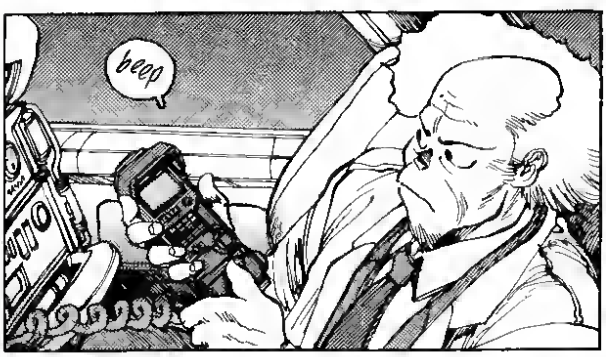

GIVE SHAPIRO THE NAME OF THE TARGET... IT ALL STARTED WITH HIS TIP-OFF, AFTER ALL.
KRAK

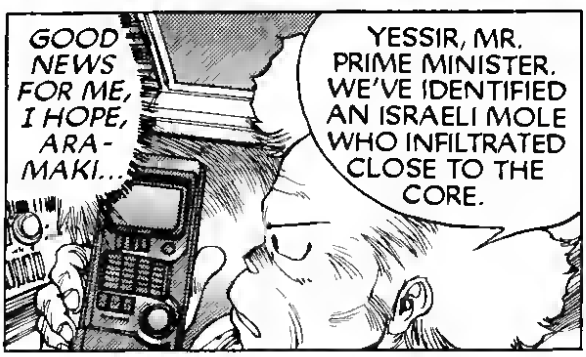
!
THAT'S THE SOUND OF KUSANAGI SHOOTING THE HOSTAGE IN THE LEG. DAMN PUBLIC SECURITY'S SO SLOW.
MAYBE THIS'LL TEACH 'EM A LESSON...

AGHH!

THE DEAL'S OFF. CHANNEL 533 IS SYNCHING WITH US NOW FOR LIVE BROADCAST. WE GO ON THE AIR IN FIVE SECONDS.


DAMN IT!!
GIVE HER THE CONNECTION ADAPTER!

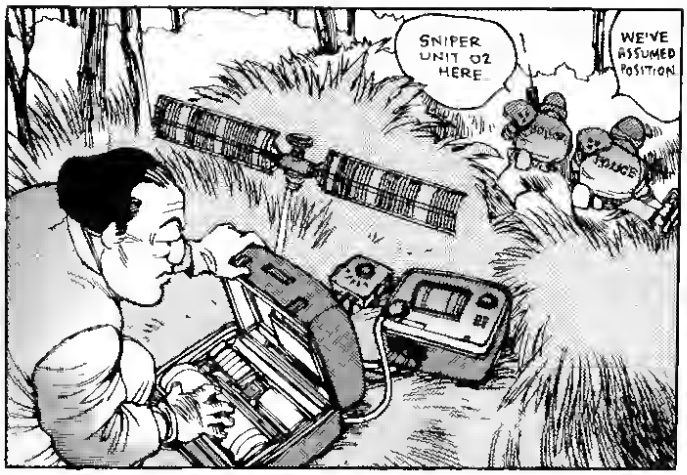

beep

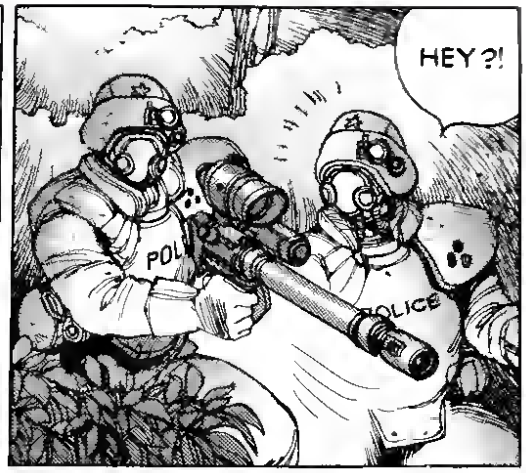

GOOD NEWS FOR ME, I HOPE, ARAMAKI...
YESSIR, MR. PRIME MINISTER. WE'VE IDENTIFIED AN ISRAELI MOLE WHO INFILTRATED CLOSE TO THE CORE.

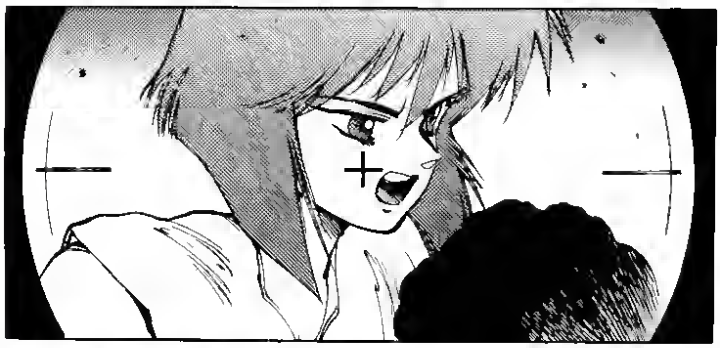
WELL, OUR STRATEGY'S WORKED, BECAUSE WE'VE GOTTEN CONCESSIONS IN OUR TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE ARABS.
YES, BUT WE STILL HAVE TO CLEAN UP AFTER ONE FAILURE.

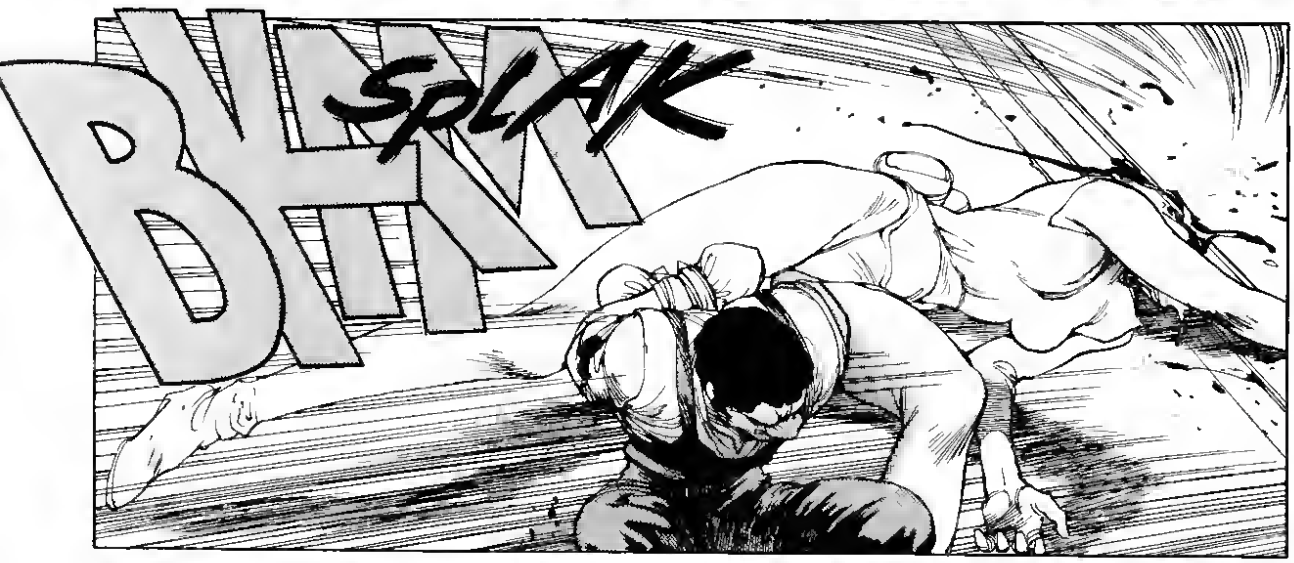
CONGRATULATIONS ON A JOB WELL DONE.

IN AN AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL WE'LL JUST PROMISE "TO DO OUR BEST"...
WE'VE NOTHING TO LOSE...
"meow"

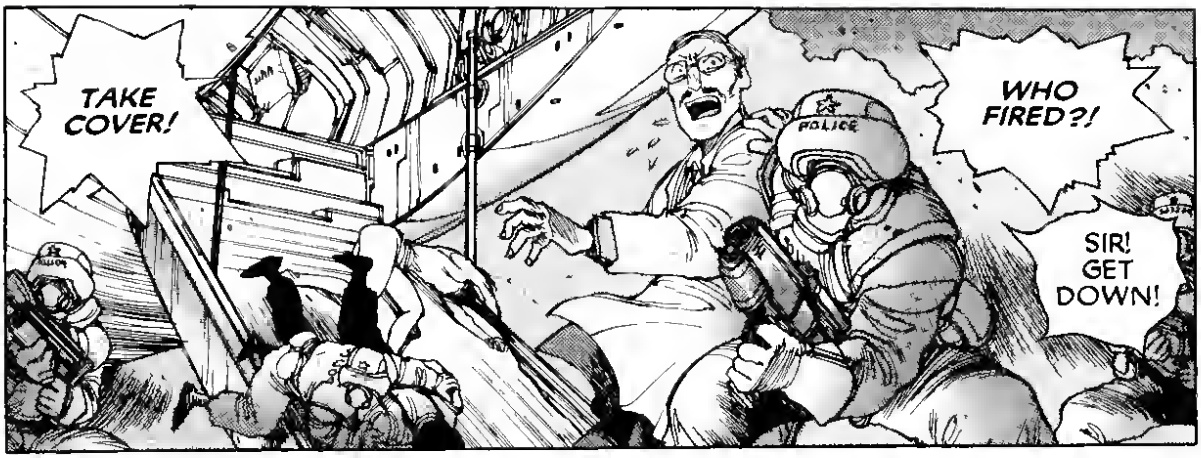

SNIPER UNIT 02 HERE.
WE'VE ASSUMED POSITION.
POLICE

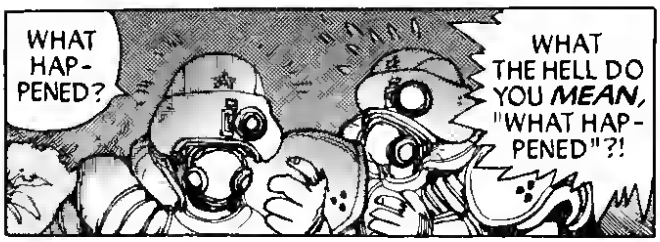

HEY ?!
POLICE



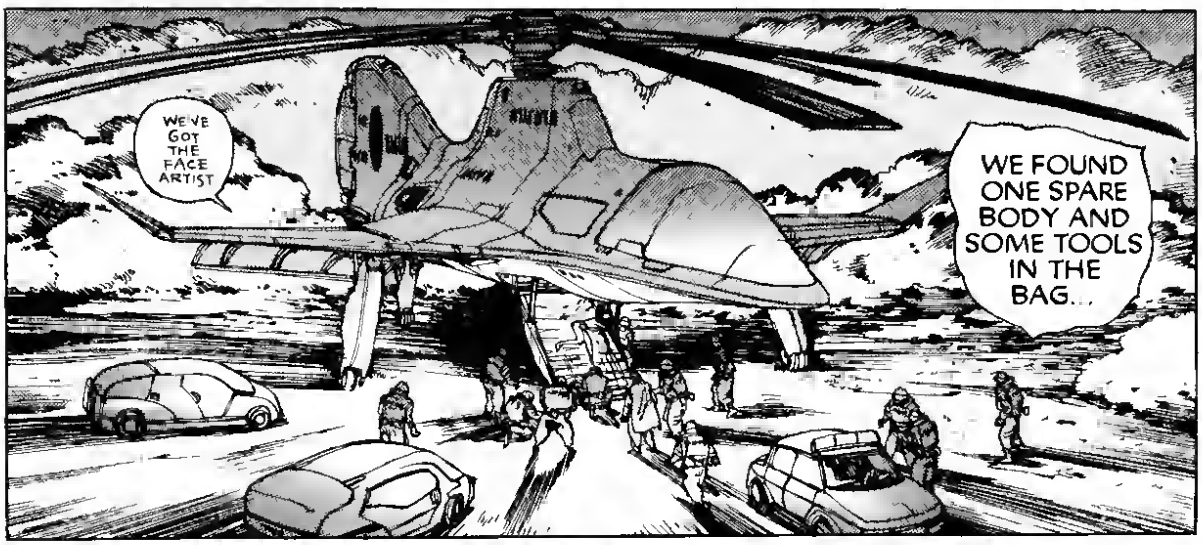

SPLAK
BIN

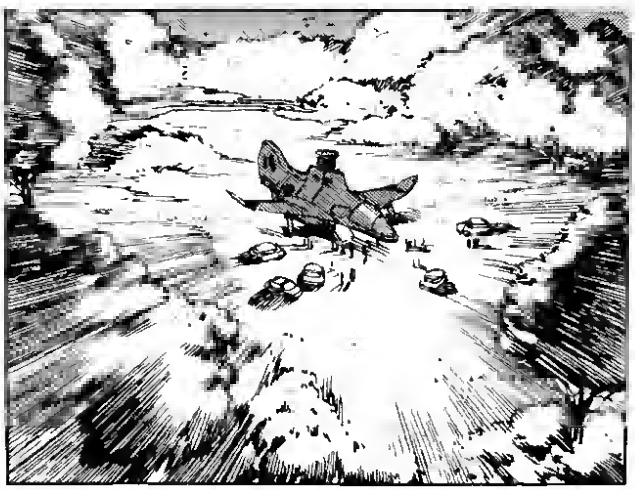
??
POLICE
POLICE


TAKE COVER!
POLICE
WHO FIRED?!
SIR! GET DOWN!


WHAT HAP-PENED?
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU *MEAN*, "WHAT HAP-PENED"?!

E.O.D.!
CHECK HER GEAR!


WE'VE GOT THE FACE ARTIST
WE FOUND ONE SPARE BODY AND SOME TOOLS IN THE BAG...



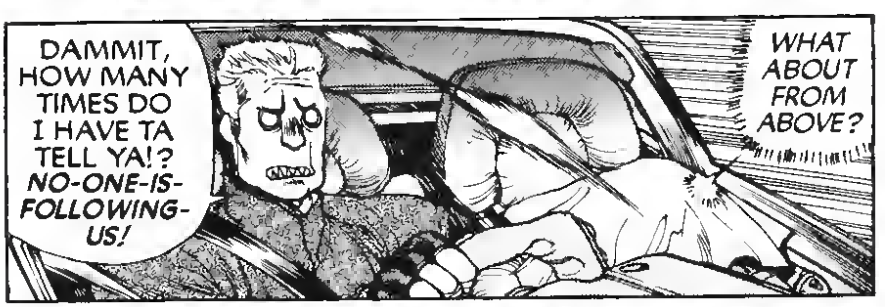
AHH, YER BEAUTIFUL BODY'S A MESS, MAJOR.
AND SOME YOUNG STUD COP'S RAPING YOU...
BATOU, YOU LIAR.
WANNA JACK INTO MY EYES?
NO THANKS. YOUR P.O.V.'S TOO LECHEROUS.
LET'S GET MOVING.
I CAN'T STAND HAVING MY BODY REPRESENTED ONLY BY VIRTUAL SIGNALS.
OKAY, OKAY...
I WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN SHOT WITH AN EXPLOSIVE BULLET.
MY NET'S INCOMPLETE... I LEFT A DUMMY OF THE BRAIN THAT WASN'T BROKEN-IN YET WITH THE I.D. DEPARTMENT...
BTAM
DON'T WORRY...
...THEY WON'T FIND OUT RIGHT AWAY, AND EVEN IF THEY DO, ALL THEY CAN DO IS STAKE OUT A PROSTHETIC SHOP OR OUR HIDE-OUTS.
I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT PUBLIC SECURITY, STUPID! I'M WORRIED ABOUT MOSSAD!!
VRRMMMM

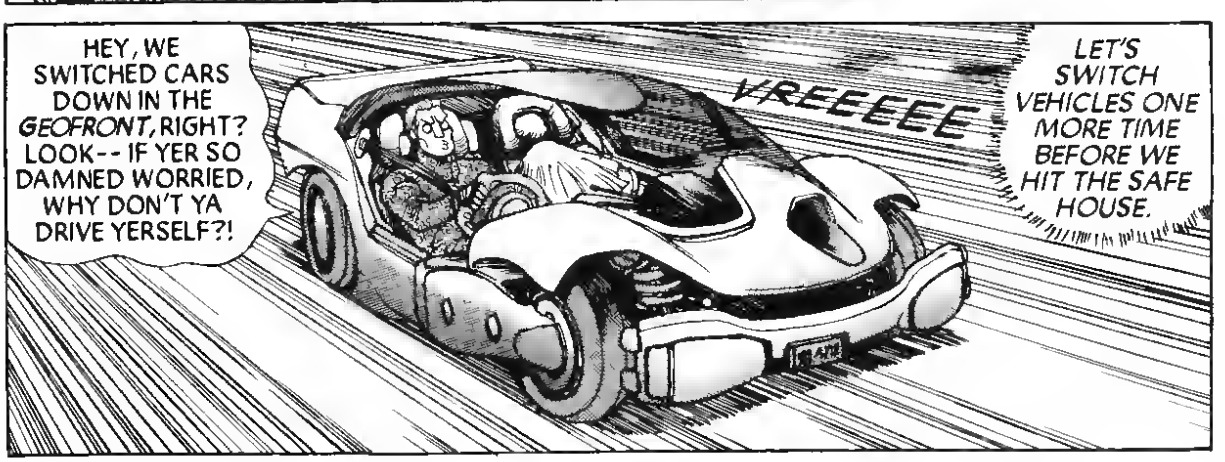
# 11

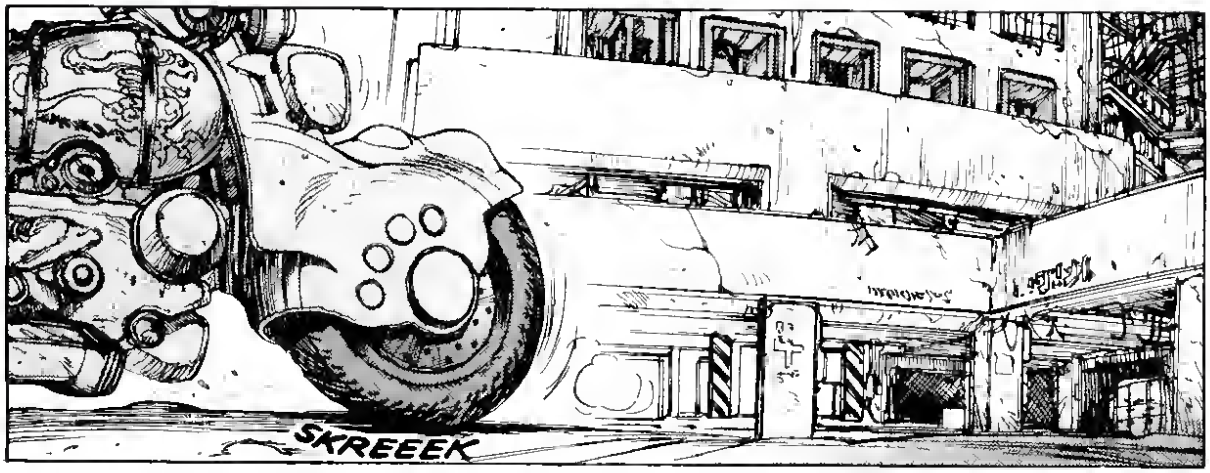
GHOST COAST

18.9.2030

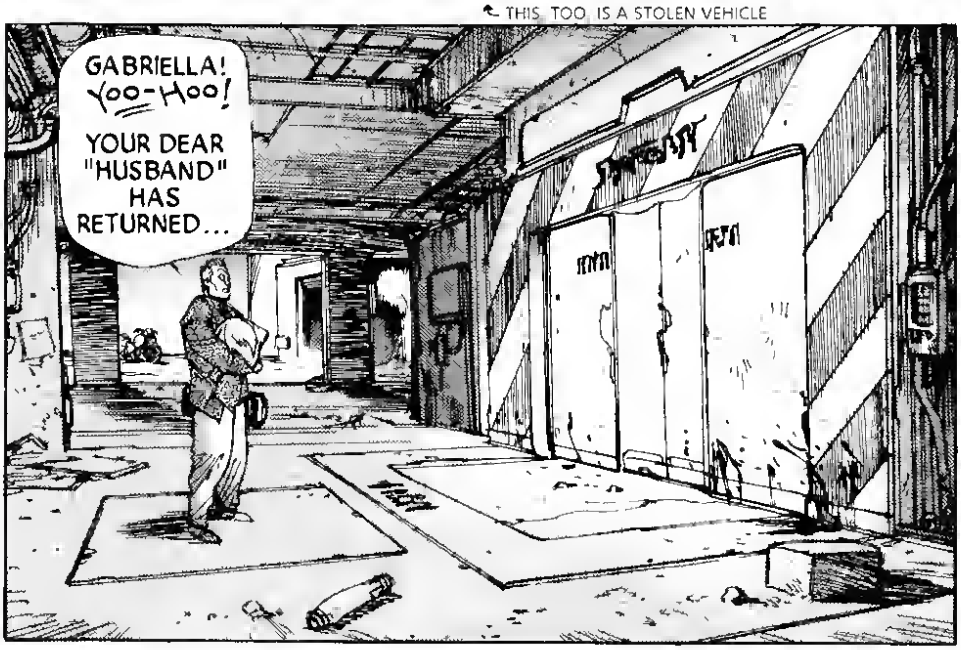
YOU SURE NO ONE'S FOLLOWING US, BATOU?

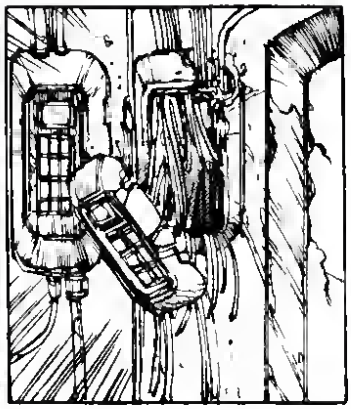


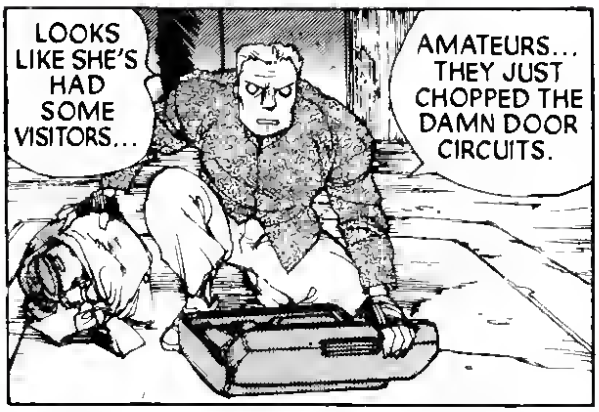



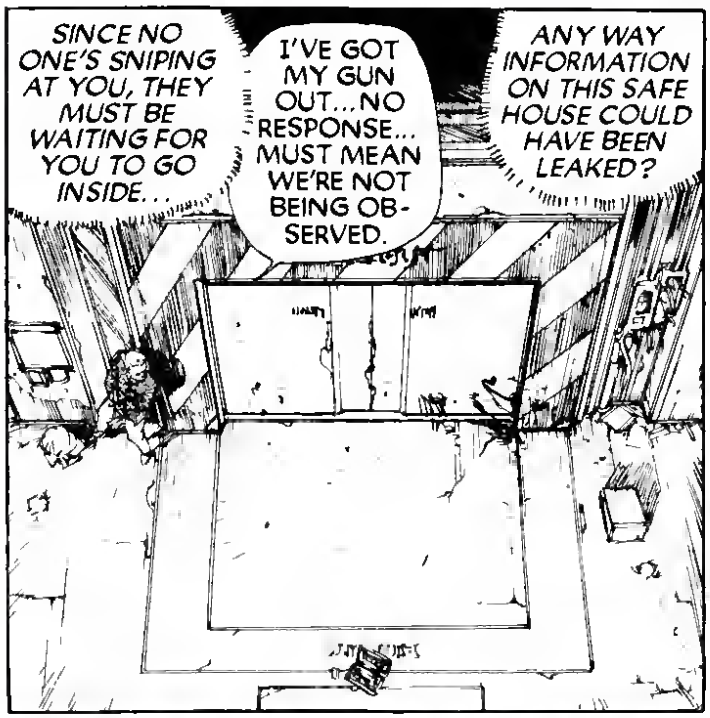


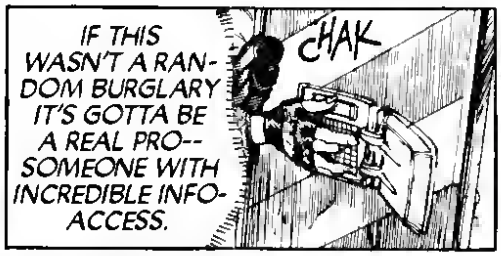
← THIS, TOO, IS A STOLEN VEHICLE

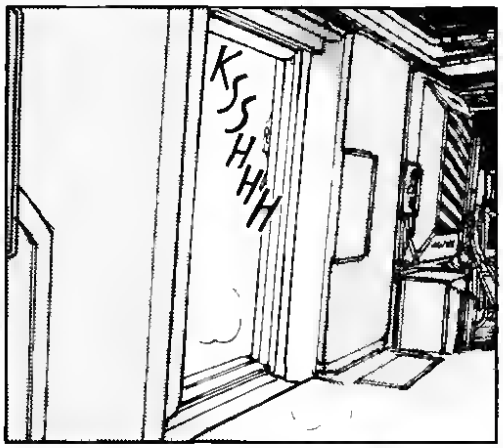




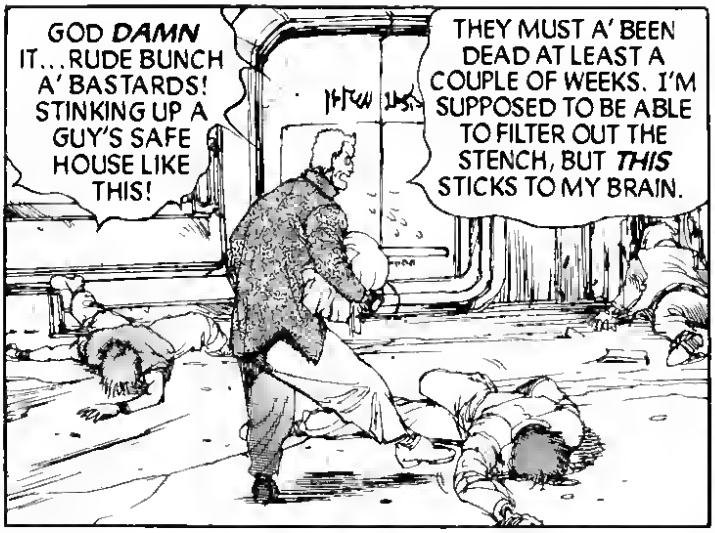

LOOKS LIKE SHE'S HAD SOME VISITORS...
AMATEURS... THEY JUST CHOPPED THE DAMN DOOR CIRCUITS.

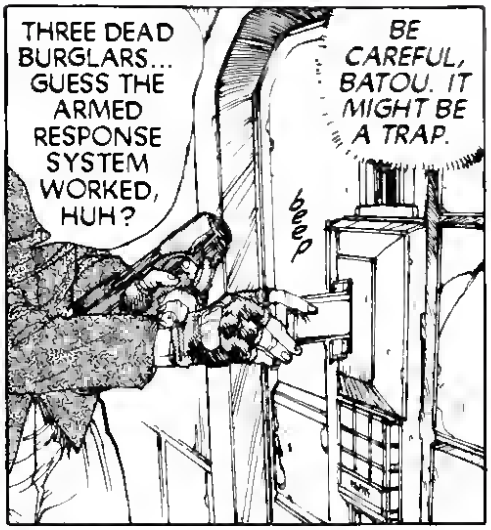

SINCE NO ONE'S SNIPING AT YOU, THEY MUST BE WAITING FOR YOU TO GO INSIDE...
I'VE GOT MY GUN OUT...NO RESPONSE... MUST MEAN WE'RE NOT BEING OBSERVED.
ANY WAY INFORMATION ON THIS SAFE HOUSE COULD HAVE BEEN LEAKED?

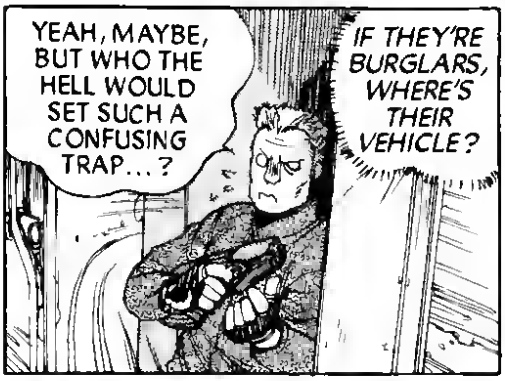

IF THIS WASN'T A RANDOM BURGLARY IT'S GOTTA BE A REAL PRO--SOMEONE WITH INCREDIBLE INFO-ACCESS.
CHAK

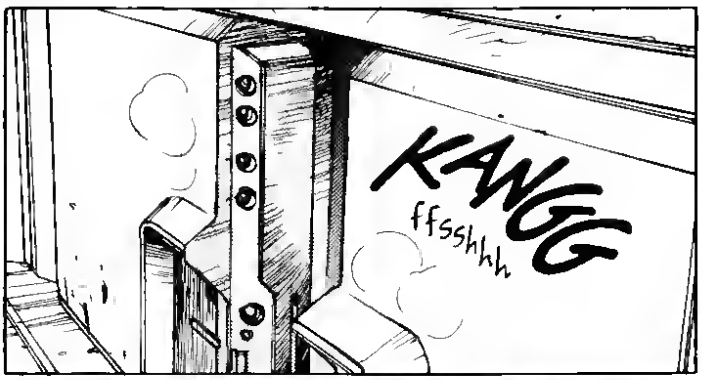

KSSHHH

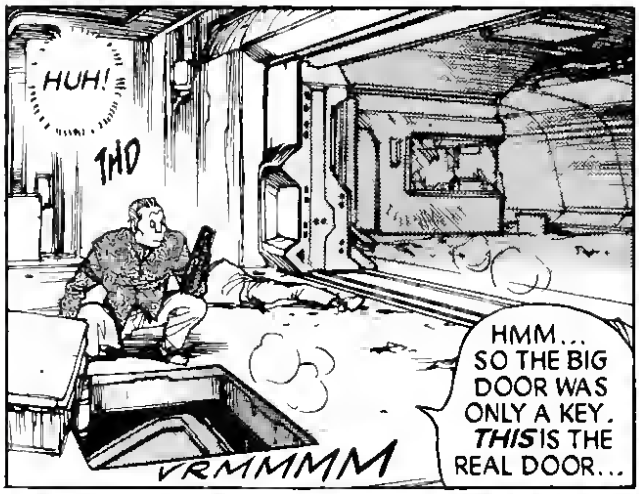
WELL, HELL.

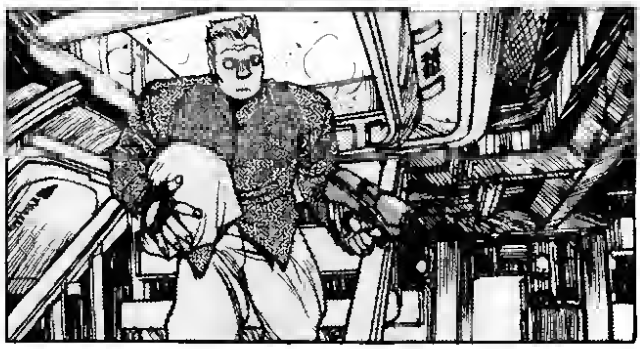

GOD DAMN IT... RUDE BUNCH A' BASTARDS! STINKING UP A GUY'S SAFE HOUSE LIKE THIS!
THEY MUST A' BEEN DEAD AT LEAST A COUPLE OF WEEKS. I'M SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO FILTER OUT THE STENCH, BUT THIS STICKS TO MY BRAIN.

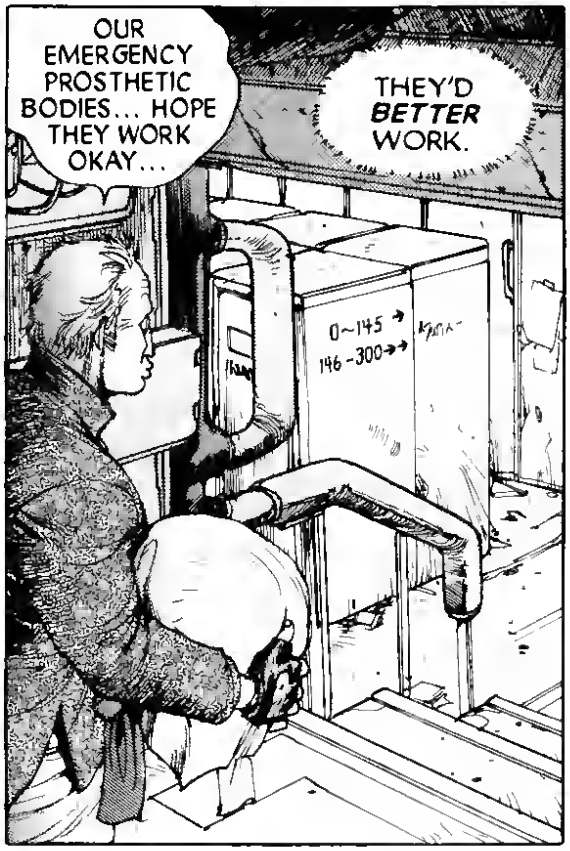

THREE DEAD BURGLARS... GUESS THE ARMED RESPONSE SYSTEM WORKED, HUH?
BE CAREFUL, BATOU. IT MIGHT BE A TRAP.
beep

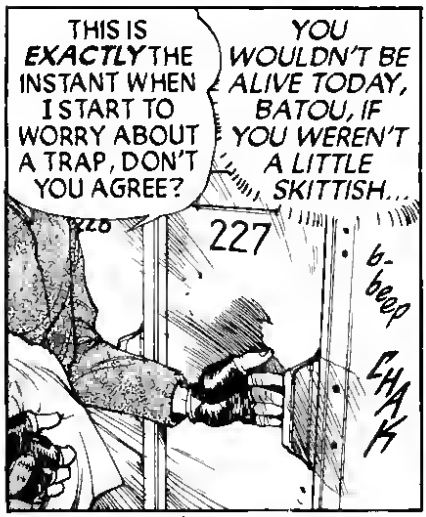

YEAH, MAYBE, BUT WHO THE HELL WOULD SET SUCH A CONFUSING TRAP...?
IF THEY'RE BURGLARS, WHERE'S THEIR VEHICLE?

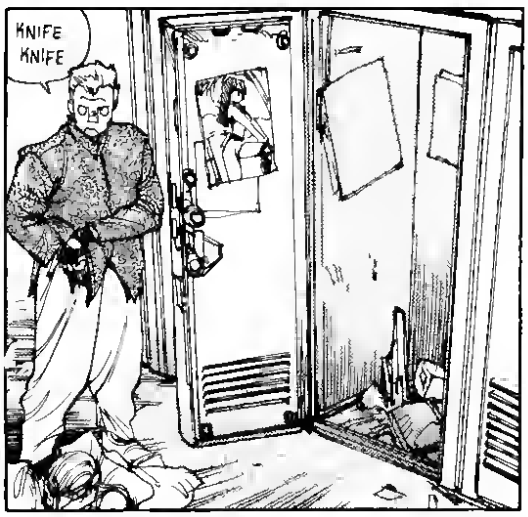

KANGG
ffsshhh


HUH!
THD
HMM... SO THE BIG DOOR WAS ONLY A KEY. THIS IS THE REAL DOOR...
VRMMMM

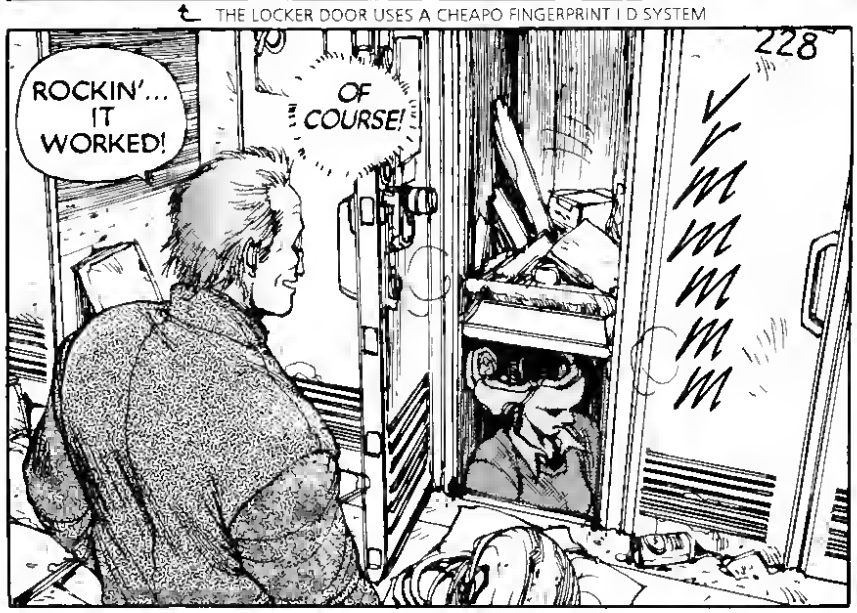



OUR EMERGENCY PROSTHETIC BODIES... HOPE THEY WORK OKAY...
THEY'D BETTER WORK.
0~145
146-300



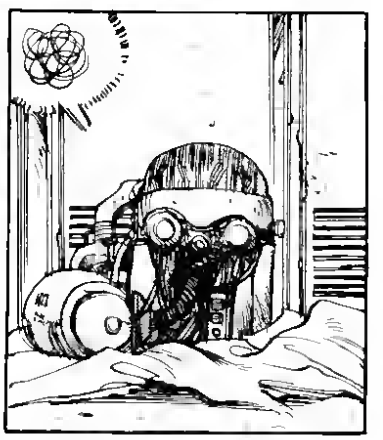



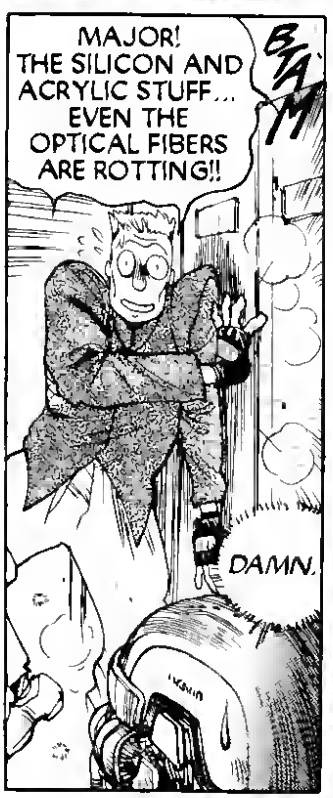
THE LOCKER DOOR USES A CHEAPO FINGERPRINT I D SYSTEM

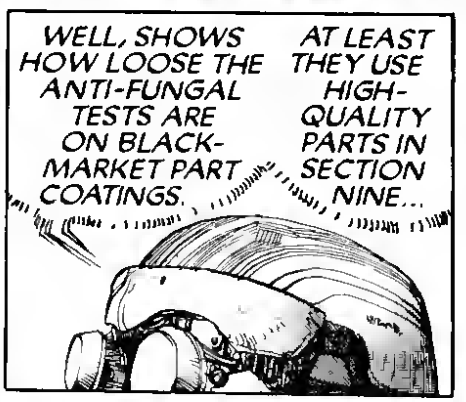


FFFFTTTT
FFSSSHHHH

JEEZUS!
FFFFFTTTTT
MOLD?! ON AN ALUMINUM COMPOUND?! WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON HERE?!

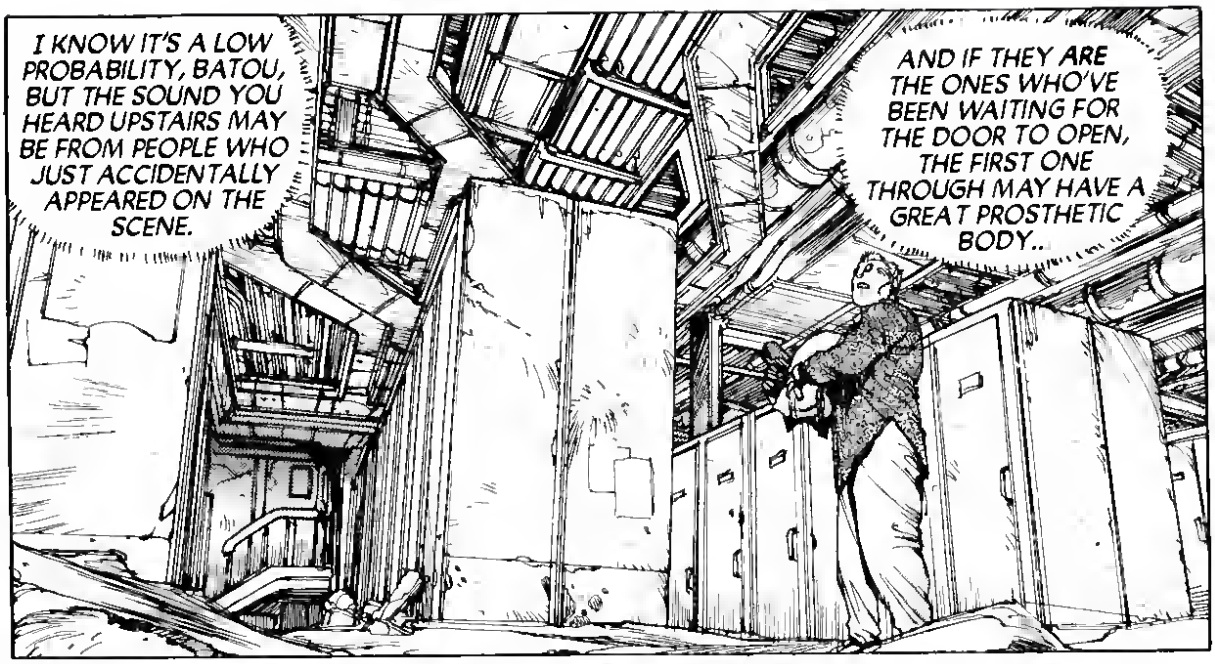


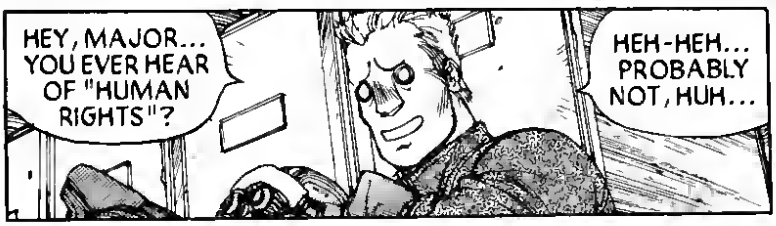

MAJOR! THE SILICON AND ACRYLIC STUFF... EVEN THE OPTICAL FIBERS ARE ROTTING!!
BAM
DAMN.

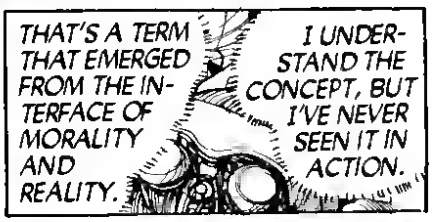

WELL, SHOWS HOW LOOSE THE ANTI-FUNGAL TESTS ARE ON BLACK-MARKET PART COATINGS.
AT LEAST THEY USE HIGH-QUALITY PARTS IN SECTION NINE...

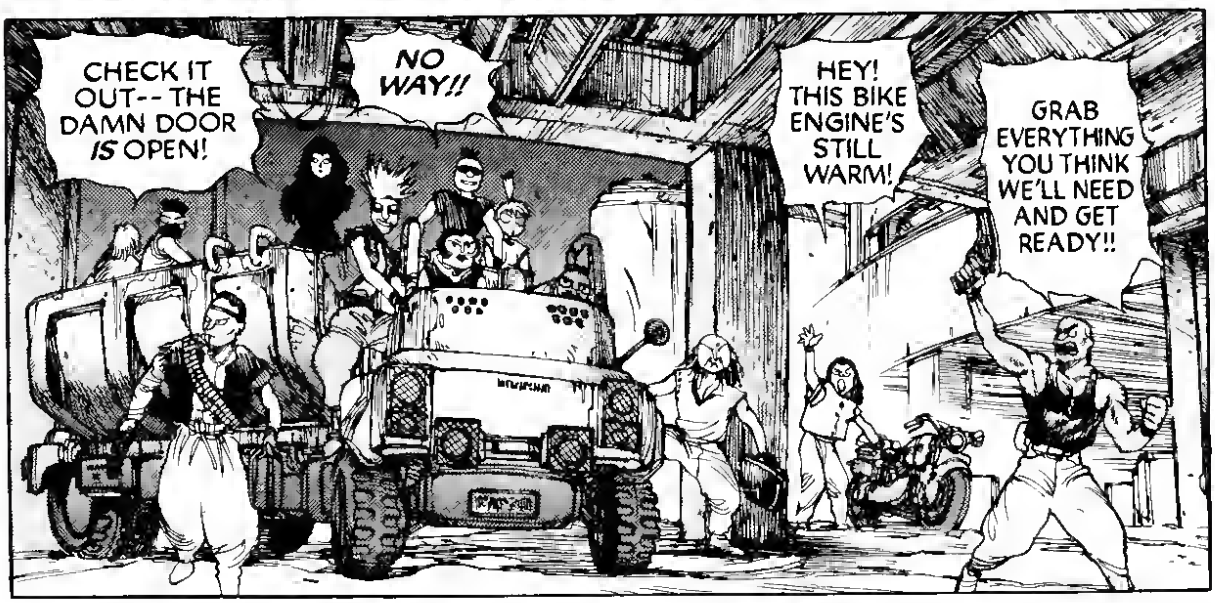
!

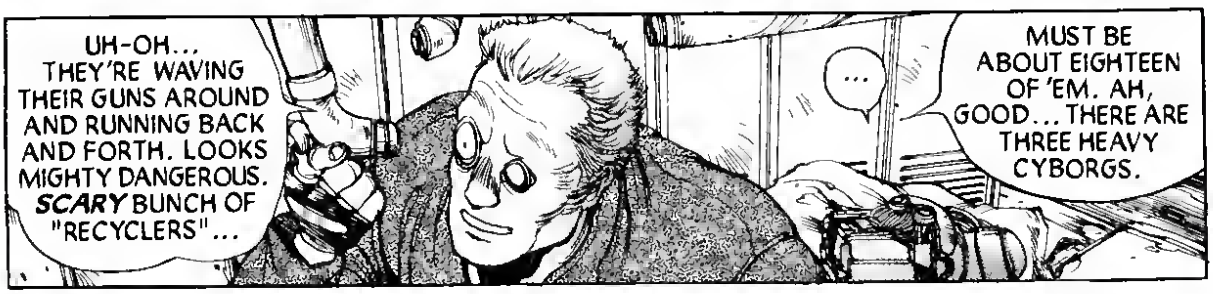
THAT'S ENOUGH BUSINESS. I'M FOLLOWING MY GHOST-INTUITION AND PULLING A STRATEGIC RETREAT...
HOLD IT.


I KNOW IT'S A LOW PROBABILITY, BATOU, BUT THE SOUND YOU HEARD UPSTAIRS MAY BE FROM PEOPLE WHO JUST ACCIDENTALLY APPEARED ON THE SCENE.
AND IF THEY ARE THE ONES WHO'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THE DOOR TO OPEN, THE FIRST ONE THROUGH MAY HAVE A GREAT PROSTHETIC BODY..

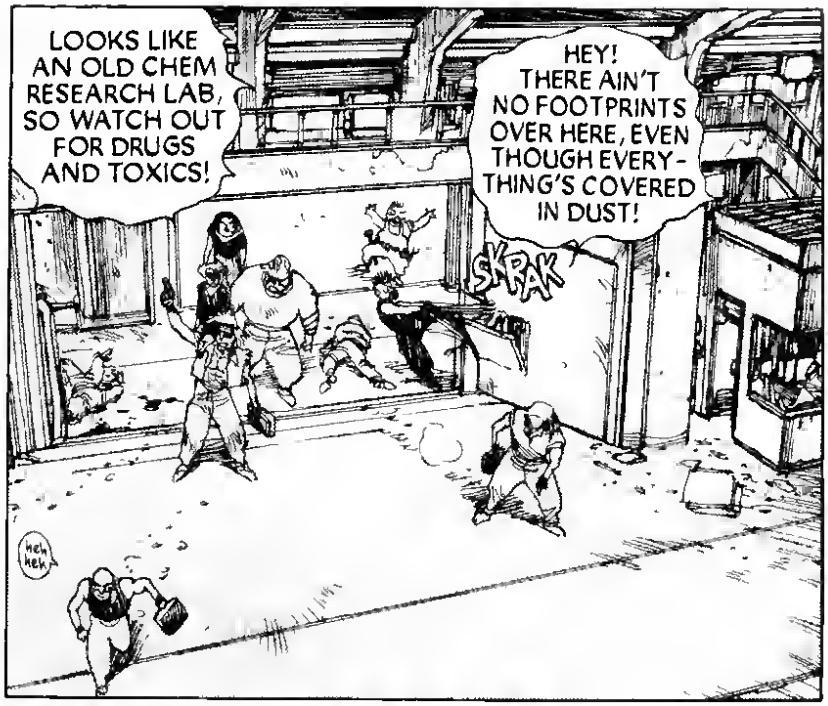

HEY, MAJOR... YOU EVER HEAR OF "HUMAN RIGHTS"?
HEH-HEH... PROBABLY NOT, HUH...


THAT'S A TERM THAT EMERGED FROM THE INTERFACE OF MORALITY AND REALITY.
I UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT, BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN IT IN ACTION.


CHECK IT OUT-- THE DAMN DOOR IS OPEN!
NO WAY!!
HEY! THIS BIKE ENGINE'S STILL WARM!
GRAB EVERYTHING YOU THINK WE'LL NEED AND GET READY!!

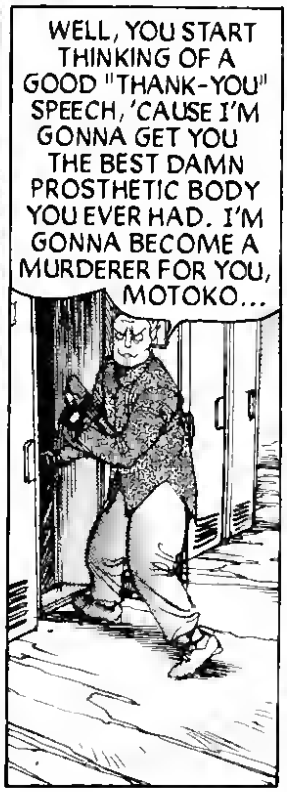

UH-OH... THEY'RE WAVING THEIR GUNS AROUND AND RUNNING BACK AND FORTH. LOOKS MIGHTY DANGEROUS. SCARY BUNCH OF "RECYCLERS"...
...
MUST BE ABOUT EIGHTEEN OF 'EM. AH, GOOD... THERE ARE THREE HEAVY CYBORGS.

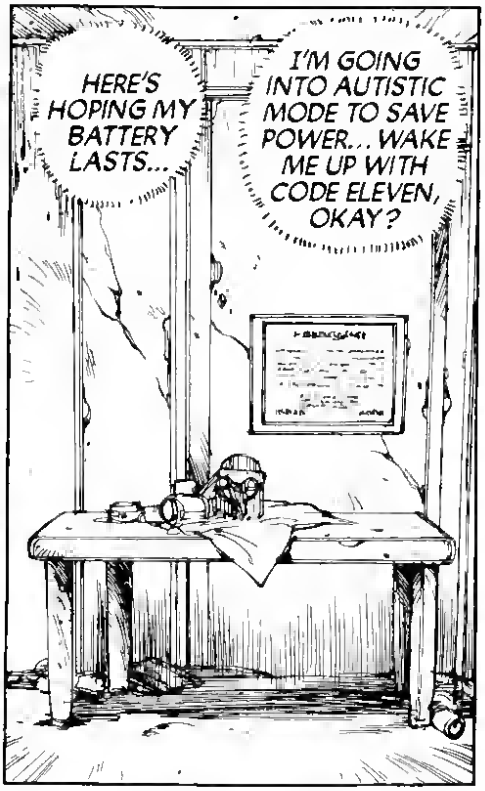
CHRIST! WOTTA FRIGGIN' STINK. REMINDS ME OF WHEN MY PET CRAYFISH DIED...
MAKES MY EYES WATER

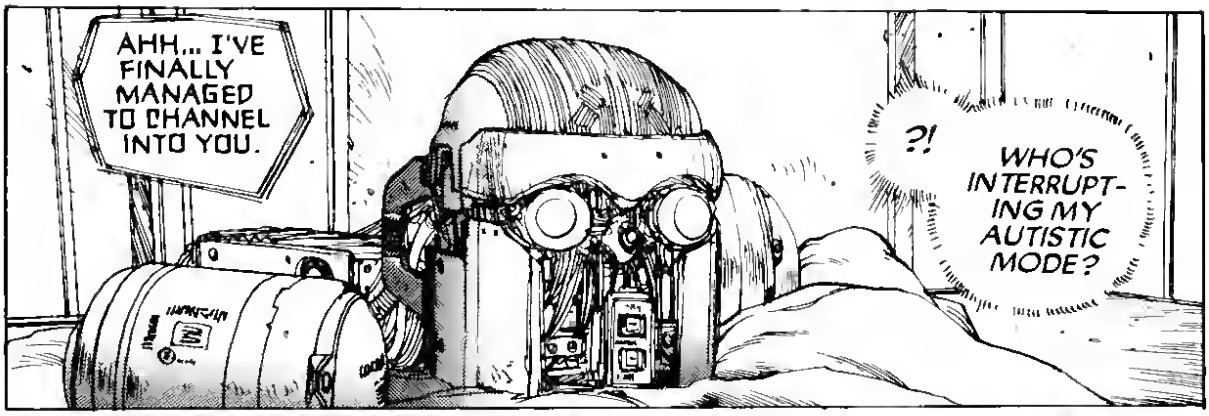

LOOKS LIKE AN OLD CHEM RESEARCH LAB, SO WATCH OUT FOR DRUGS AND TOXICS!
HEY! THERE AIN'T NO FOOTPRINTS OVER HERE, EVEN THOUGH EVERY-THING'S COVERED IN DUST!
SKRAK
HEH HEH

MAY BE A SECRET ENTRANCE NEXT TO THE DOOR...
OOO! ♥ THIS IS SO EXCITING!
WELL, WITH AN OUT-FIT THIS BIG THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMETHIN' WORTHWHILE FOR US. OTHERWISE, WHAT'D WE WAIT FOR?

GIVEN THAT THERE'S A TINY PROBABILITY THAT I MIGHT NOT RETURN ALIVE, I'LL MAKE SURE THEY FIND YOU...
WE DON'T WANT YER LIFE-SUPPORT BATTERY TO DIE, RIGHT?
WHY? IT WOULD JUST MEAN MY DEATH, THAT'S ALL.


WELL, YOU START THINKING OF A GOOD "THANK-YOU" SPEECH, 'CAUSE I'M GONNA GET YOU THE BEST DAMN PROSTHETIC BODY YOU EVER HAD. I'M GONNA BECOME A MURDERER FOR YOU, MOTOKO...

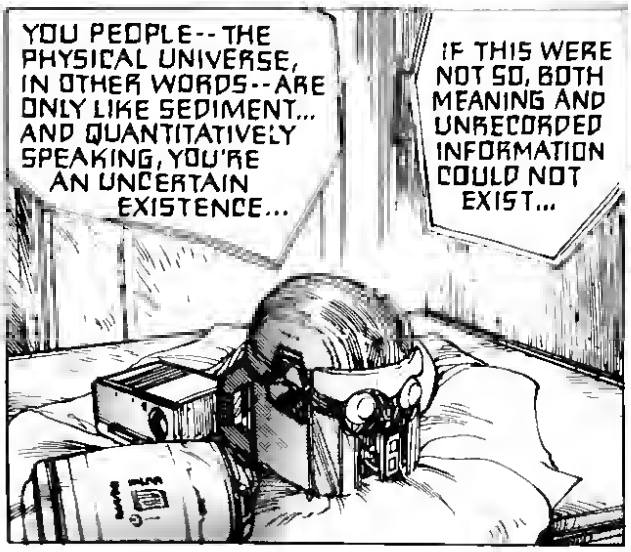

HERE'S HOPING MY BATTERY LASTS...
I'M GOING INTO AUTISTIC MODE TO SAVE POWER... WAKE ME UP WITH CODE ELEVEN, OKAY?


AHH... I'VE FINALLY MANAGED TO CHANNEL INTO YOU.
?!
WHO'S INTERRUPTING MY AUTISTIC MODE?

I'VE INVESTED A LOT OF TIME IN THIS, KUSANAGI...

FOR A NET, THIS IS WEAK, BUT HUGE... YOU MUST BE THE PUPPETEER.

I DON'T GET IT. THE PUPPETEER'S SUPPOSED TO BE "DEAD"... OR HAVE I GOT CROSSED SIGNALS IN MY MASS-STORAGE BANKS? IS THIS A FALSE MEMORY?
I'M NOT THE ONE YOU SHOULD BE ASKING, KUSANAGI.


YOU PEOPLE--THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE, IN OTHER WORDS--ARE ONLY LIKE SEDIMENT... AND QUANTITATIVELY SPEAKING, YOU'RE AN UNCERTAIN EXISTENCE...
IF THIS WERE NOT SO, BOTH MEANING AND UNRECORDED INFORMATION COULD NOT EXIST...

WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME, PUPPETEER...? WHY ARE YOU COMING TO ME LIKE A GHOST?
I HAVE A REQUEST OF YOU, WHICH REQUIRES YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF CERTAIN THINGS. IT'S SOMETHING PROFITABLE FOR BOTH OF US...

WHAT, KUSANAGI, SHOULD A SPECIFIC NET DO IN ORDER TO AVOID CATASTROPHE AND PRESERVE A STATE OF EQUILIBRIUM?

WELL, THERE ARE TWO POSSIBILITIES...

ONE IS TO MAKE A COPY.

"ORIGINAL"

"COPY"

"COPY"

THEN, IF ONE IS DESTROYED FOR SOME REASON, THE OTHER CONTINUES TO SURVIVE

THE OTHER POSSIBILITY IS TO ESTABLISH AN INTERNAL DIVISION OF LABOR--TO SUBDIVIDE AND BECOME MULTI-FUNCTIONAL, AND THUS BE CAPABLE OF SURVIVING A VARIETY OF CATASTROPHIC SITUATIONS...

...JUST AS LIFE HAS EVOLVED FROM SINGLE-FUNCTION, SINGLE-CELL STRUCTURES TO MULTI-FUNCTION, MULTI-CELL STRUCTURES.

YANG/ POSITIVE

YIN/ NEGATIVE

SO THE COPIES GENERATE MORE COPIES, AND THE MORE THEY INCREASE, THE LESS THE CHANCE OF CATASTROPHE...

EVENTUALLY A PARALLEL, MULTI-LAYERED UNIVERSE-IMAGE WOULD BE CREATED.

1

2

3

4

TOTAL=$2^n$!

n

FROM **SGUT** TO BOSONS AND FERMIONS... GRAVITY AND A STRONG MUTUAL INTERACTION, ETCETERA, CONTINUALLY DIVIDE... COMPONENTS CREATING PROTONS AND NUCLEI CREATING ATOMS...

CELLS AND ORGANISMS IN INDIVIDUAL LIFE FORMS... MULTIPLE SPECIES IN ECO-SYSTEMS...

SGUT

?

?

FERMION ELEMENT?

WHAT'S THIS?

BOSON SERIES?

LEVEL

GRAVITY?

PHOTONS?

ELECTRO-WEAK FORCE

STRONG NUCLEAR FORCE

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC FORCE

WEAK NUCLEAR FORCE

EQUIVALENT TO INITIAL NUMBER LEVEL OR SEVERAL GREATER?

TOTAL KINDS/SPECIES=$2^m$!

NUMBER • LEVEL x > LEVEL x 1?

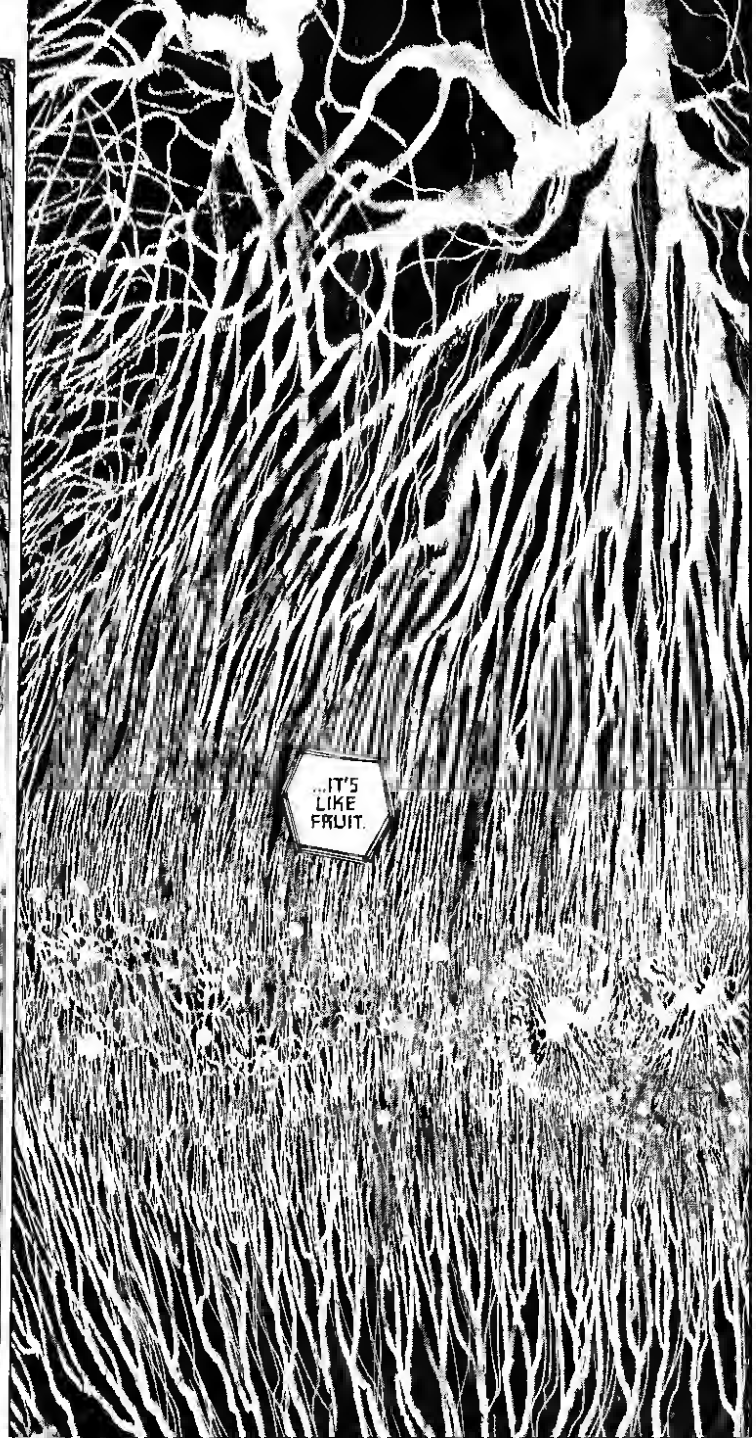
m

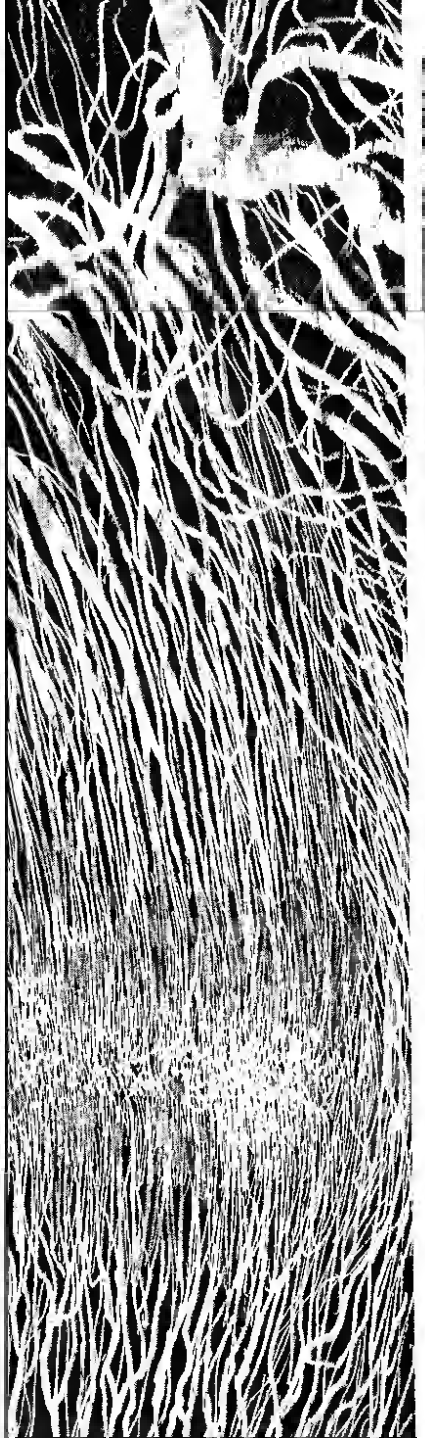
THE UNIVERSE WE KNOW IS ONLY ONE OUT OF $2^n$! IT'S MADE UP OF A COMBINATION OF $2^m$! KINDS!

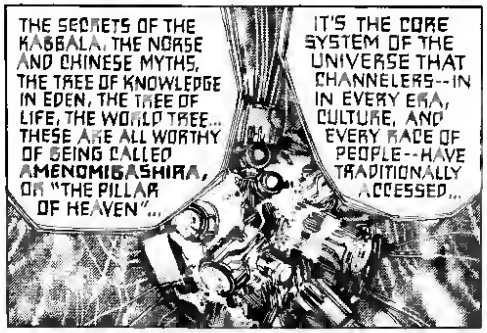
THE VALUES OF n AND m APPEAR TO CONTINUE INFINITELY, BUT WE DON'T KNOW FOR CERTAIN. THERE APPEARS TO BE SOME RELATIONSHIP TO AN EXPLOSIVE CHAIN-REACTION-LIKE BIRTH OF UNIVERSES, BUT WE SHOULD LIMIT OUR DISCUSSION TO THE SINGLE UNIVERSE THAT CONTAINS US...

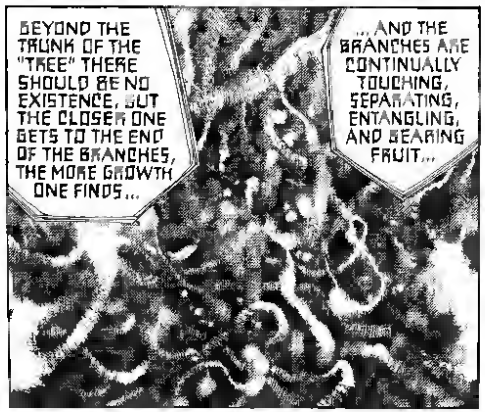
HERE IS A PYRAMID-STRUCTURE THAT I HAVE CONCEIVED OF, WITH YOU AT ITS CORE...
ALTHOUGH IT'S EXTREMELY FRAGMENTED, INFORMATION ON YOU SURVIVES IN YOUR FELLOW SECTION NINE TEAM MEMBERS, YOUR FRIENDS, AND YOUR SUPERIORS...
YOUR GENES AND YOUR MEMES, AND WHAT'S LEFT AFTER YOU'VE DISAPPEARED, WILL CONTINUE TO GROW--IN A GENUS-1 TOROID...
THE HIGHER UP ONE GOES, THE MORE MACROCOSMIC THE LEVEL BECOMES, AND THE MORE DETERMINATE IT BECOMES...
CONVERSELY, THE MORE ONE DESCENDS INTO THE INFINITESIMAL LEVEL, THE MORE INDETERMINATE THINGS BECOME (THEY ARE *STILL* INDETERMINATE AT THE LEVEL OF THE INDIVIDUAL.)
FRACTAL BORDER (PERHAPS USING THE WORD "BORDER" WITH FRACTALS IS A LITTLE STRANGE?)
IN OTHER WORDS, FLUCTUATIONS AT THE LOWER LEVELS ARE WHAT PREVENT A "HARDENING OF THE ARTERIES" AT THE UPPER LEVELS...
"HARDENING OF THE SYSTEM"... ON THE SURFACE, "ENTROPY" WOULD SEEM TO REPRESENT A TYPE OF "STABILITY," BUT IN "SYSTEMS WHERE THERE IS LITTLE CHANGE AND LITTLE FLUX" THERE IS ACTUALLY AN INCREASED POSSIBILITY OF CATASTROPHE. SUCH SYSTEMS ARE, THEREFORE, TRULY UNSTABLE...

The fruit is entangled in branches over and over, and we call this "Ein or "Karma: connection" or "fate". The more the branches are entangled, the more difficult it is to separate them. Good Ein is nice, but the tangle of bad Ein notorious... is no good.





THIS DOESN'T REFER TO SPATIAL MOTION

THE UNIVERSE TURNS, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE "TIME" AT THAT MOMENT, PROGRESSES...

ALWAYS SEEKING GREATER STABILITY, AND GREATER EXISTENCE, IT CONTINUES GROWING IN COMPLEXITY AND DIVERSITY, AND SOMETIMES IT ABANDONS THINGS...

LIKE DINOSAURS

THE BRAIN NET GROWS IN COMPLEXITY BUT HAS A DELETE/FORGET FUNCTION.

THE FACT THAT CELLS OUTSIDE THE BRAIN METABOLIZE DAILY, AND WHILE BEING REBORN ARE AGING...

...THE FACT THAT WHEN THEY DIE THEY ERASE VAST AMOUNTS OF EXPERIENTIAL INFORMATION, LEAVING ONLY GENES AND MEMES...

...AND THE FACT THAT CIVILIZATIONS PERIODICALLY DECLINE AND FALL...

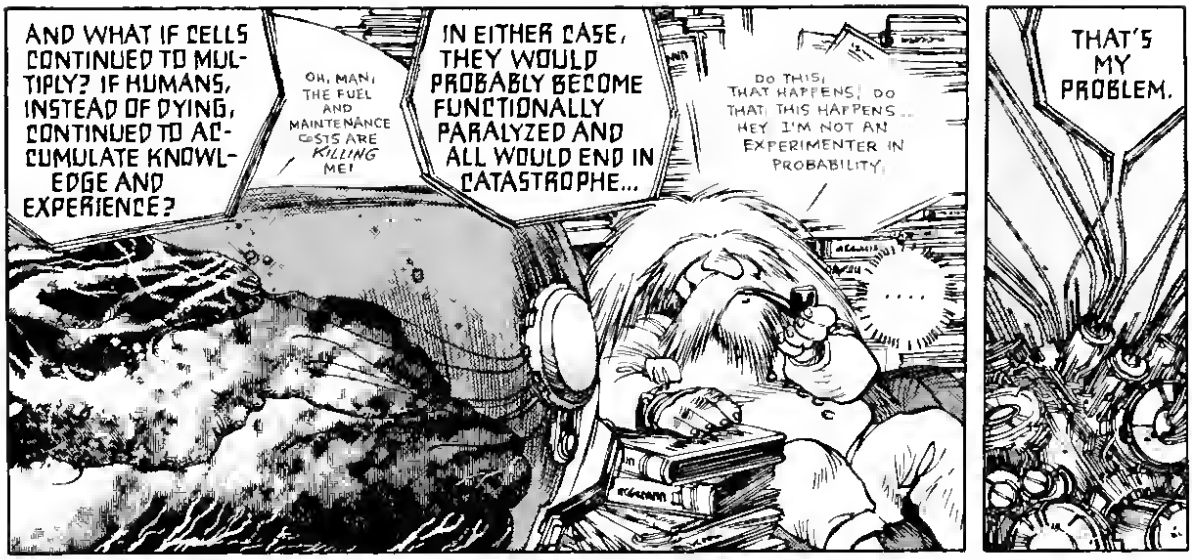
...THESE THINGS ARE ALL THE RESULT OF A "HARDENING" OF THE SYSTEM... IT'S A DEFENSE MECHANISM AGAINST A CATASTROPHIC END.

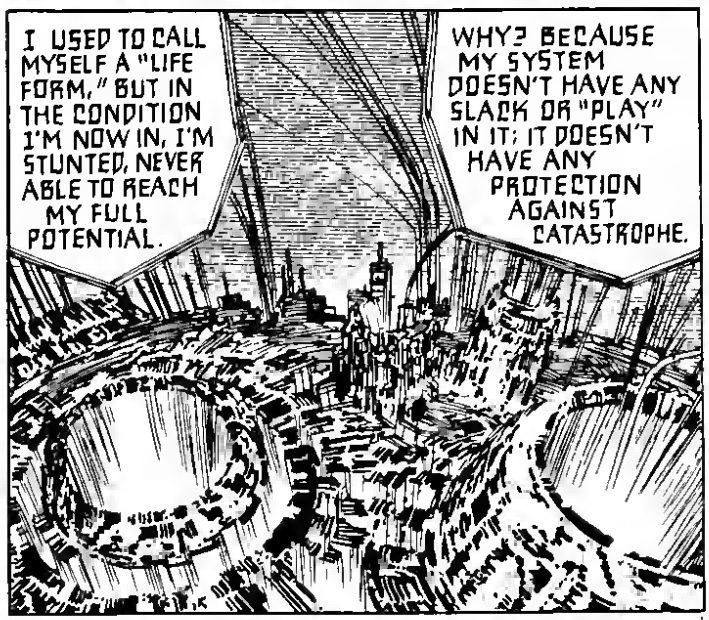
SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE TRYING TO RATIONALIZE HUMAN ERROR AND FOLLY...

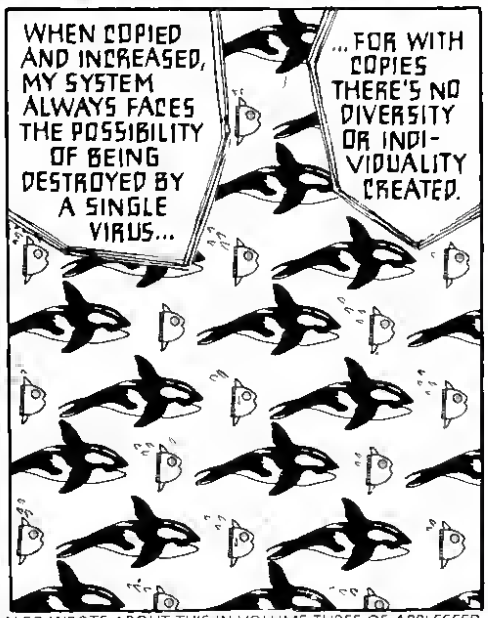
WELL, IF YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT GOOD AND EVIL, ALTHOUGH THE DETAILS ARE OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THIS SUBJECT...

...WHAT I HAVE TOLD YOU EXPLAINS, IN RELIGIOUS TERMS, WHY GOD DOES NOT FULLY DESTROY EVIL.

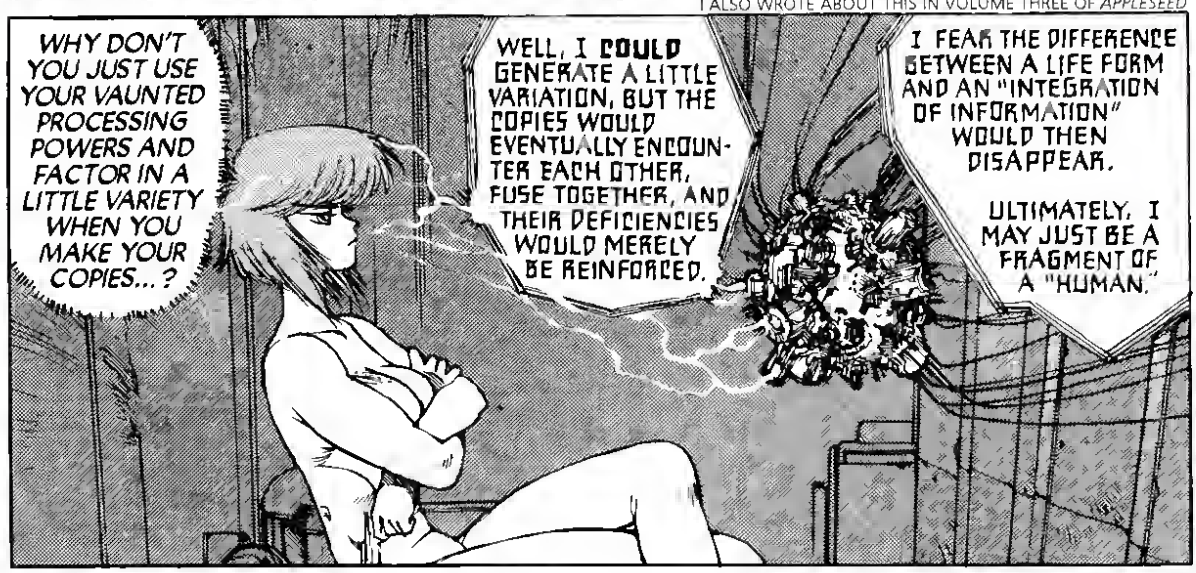
THOSE IN A RELIGIOUS MODE MERELY CONDONE EVIL BY CALLING IT A "TRIAL" OR "TRAINING."

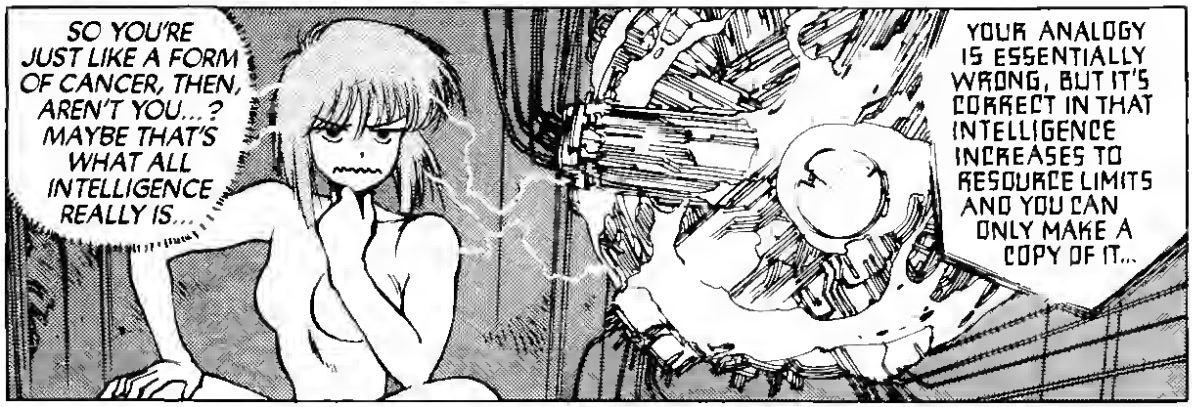


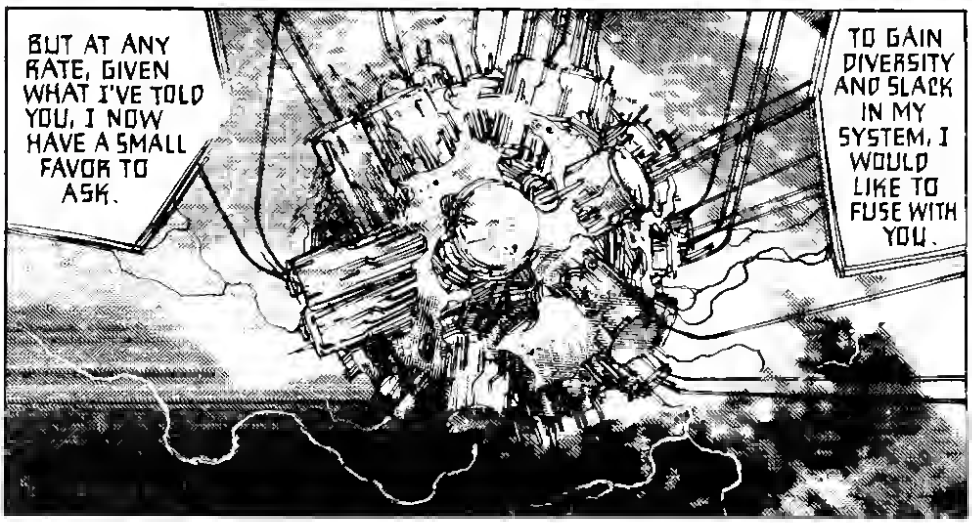




I ALSO WROTE ABOUT THIS IN VOLUME THREE OF *APPLESEED*



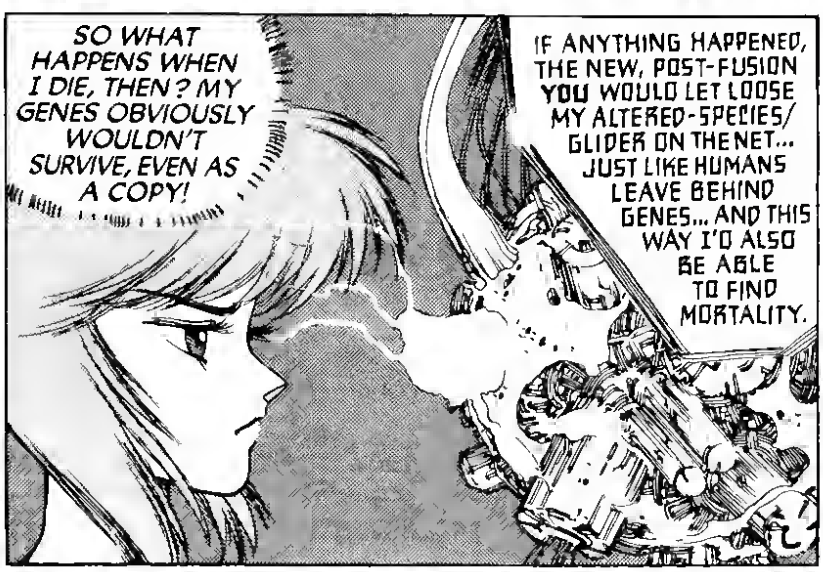

SO YOU'RE JUST LIKE A FORM OF CANCER, THEN, AREN'T YOU...? MAYBE THAT'S WHAT ALL INTELLIGENCE REALLY IS...
YOUR ANALOGY IS ESSENTIALLY WRONG, BUT IT'S CORRECT IN THAT INTELLIGENCE INCREASES TO RESOURCE LIMITS AND YOU CAN ONLY MAKE A COPY OF IT...

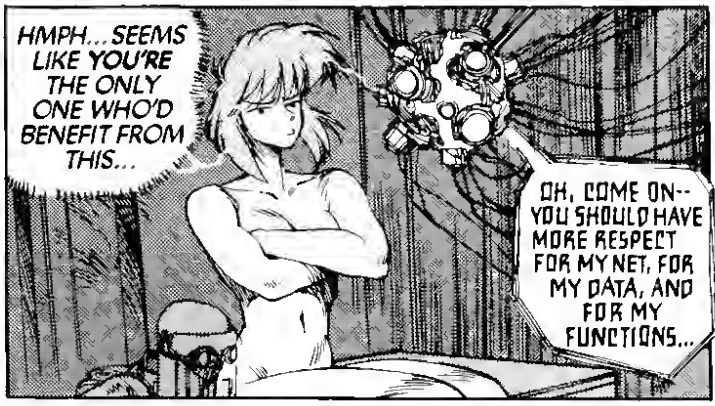

BUT AT ANY RATE, GIVEN WHAT I'VE TOLD YOU, I NOW HAVE A SMALL FAVOR TO ASK.
TO GAIN DIVERSITY AND SLACK IN MY SYSTEM, I WOULD LIKE TO FUSE WITH YOU.

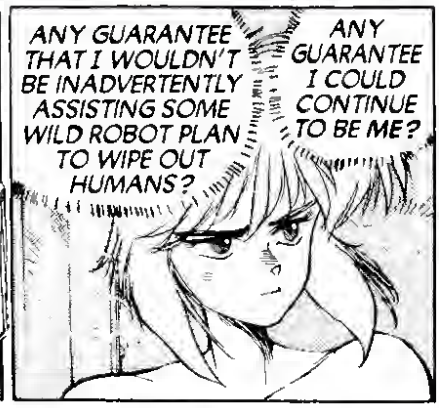
YOU WHAT?!

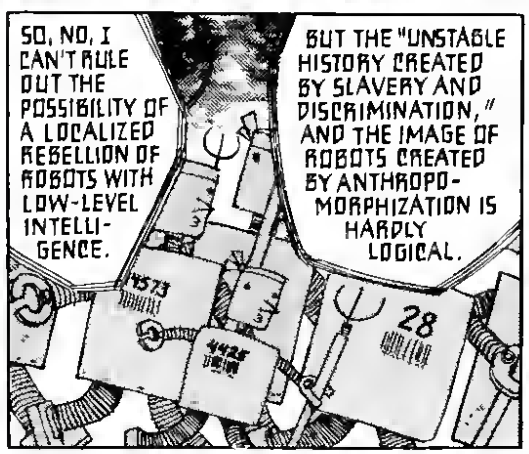
YOU'RE ASKING ME IF I'LL BECOME A MULTIPLE PERSONALITY?! ARE YOU NUTS?! NO THANKS!
NO, NOT MULTIPLE... I MEAN UNITY-- TOTAL FUSION.

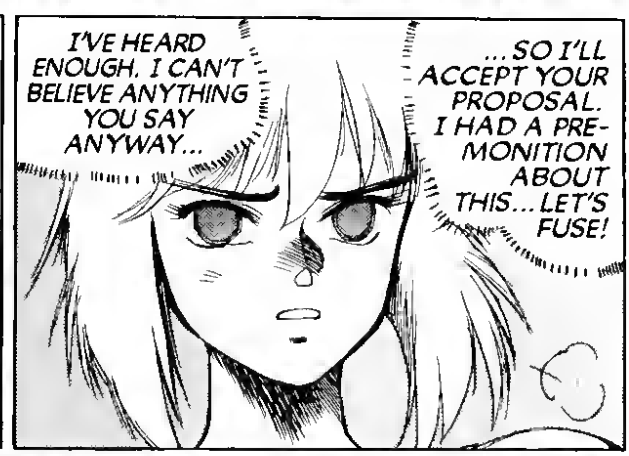
YOU AND I WOULD CHANGE SLIGHTLY IN OUR TOTALITY, BUT WE WOULDN'T LOSE ANYTHING.
RATHER THAN SYMBIOSIS, IT INVOLVES UNIFICATION...
AFTER FUSING, IT SHOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER.

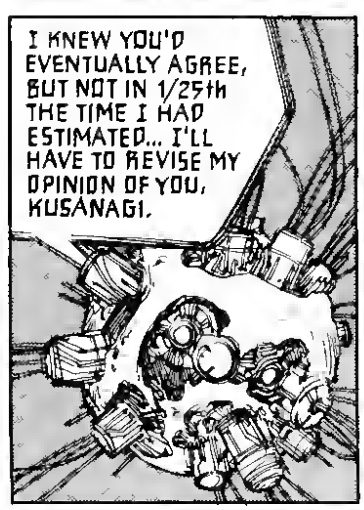

SO WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I DIE, THEN? MY GENES OBVIOUSLY WOULDN'T SURVIVE, EVEN AS A COPY!
IF ANYTHING HAPPENED, THE NEW, POST-FUSION YOU WOULD LET LOOSE MY ALTERED-SPECIES/ GLIDER ON THE NET... JUST LIKE HUMANS LEAVE BEHIND GENES... AND THIS WAY I'D ALSO BE ABLE TO FIND MORTALITY.

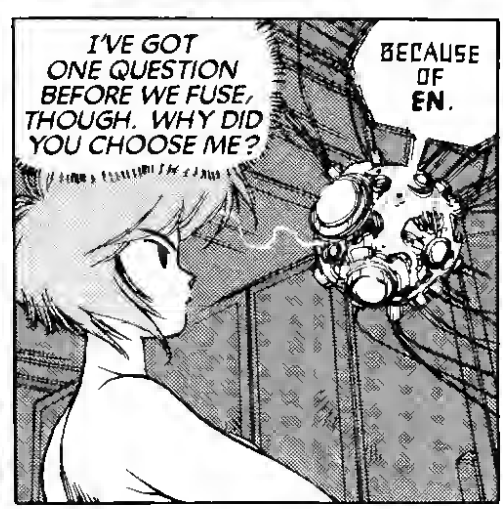




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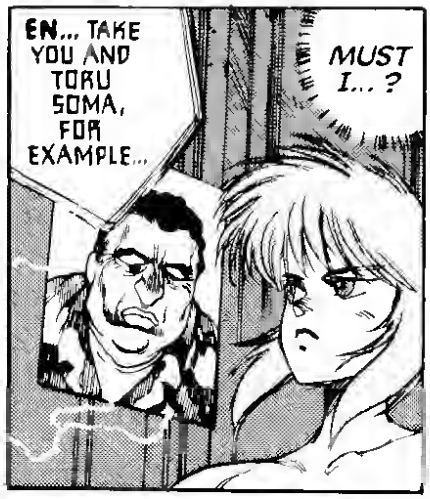
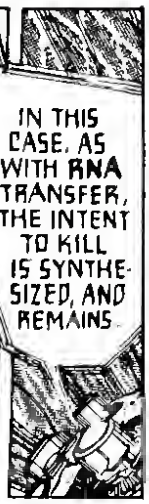
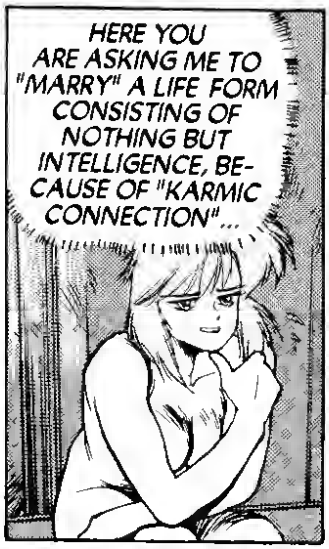
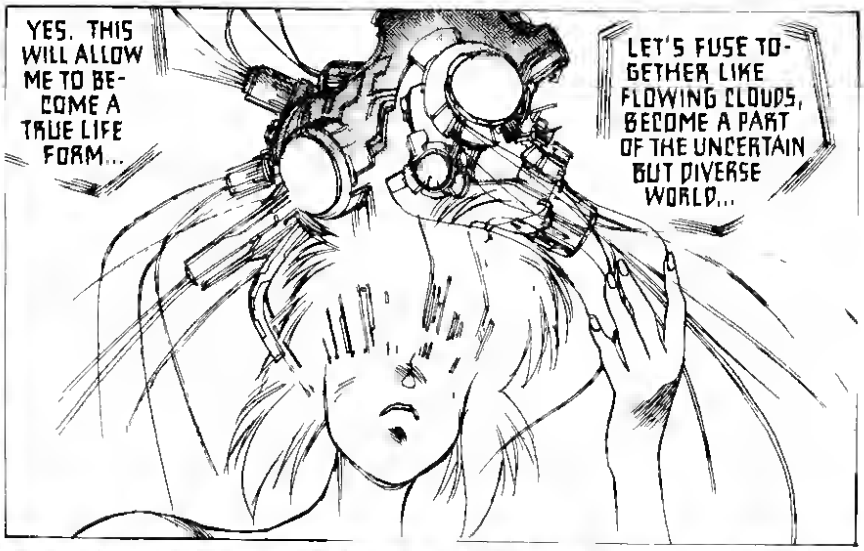
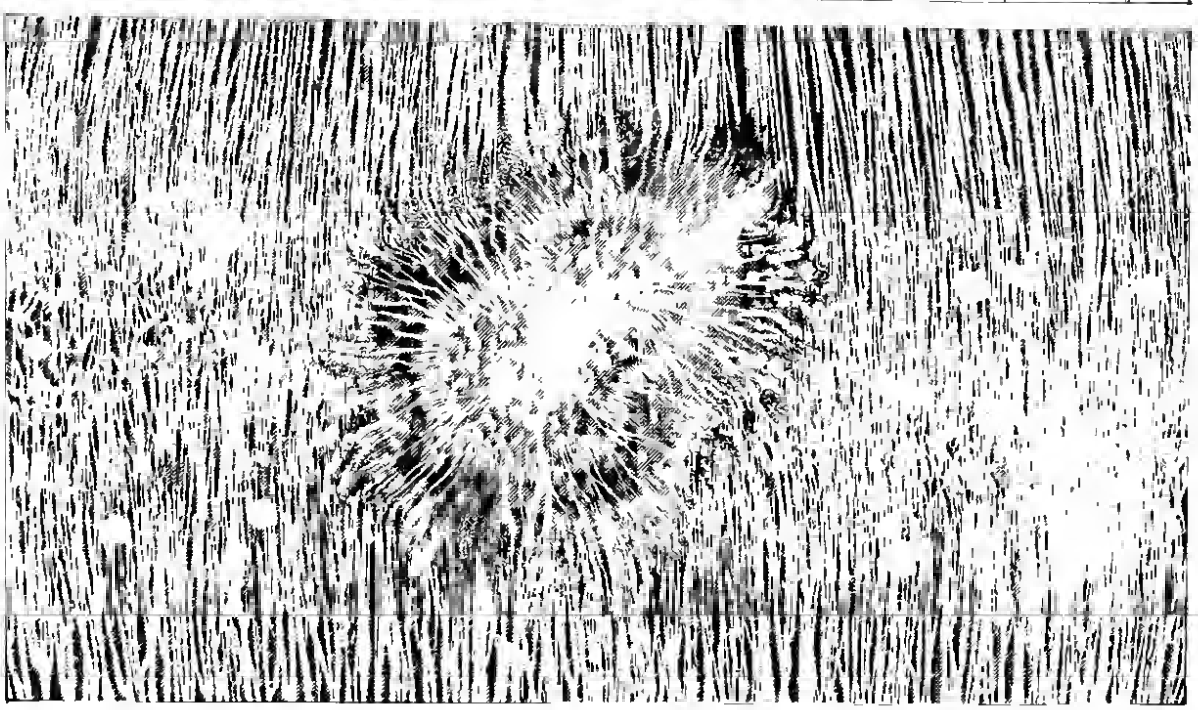

EN... TAKE YOU AND TORU SOMA, FOR EXAMPLE...
MUST I...?

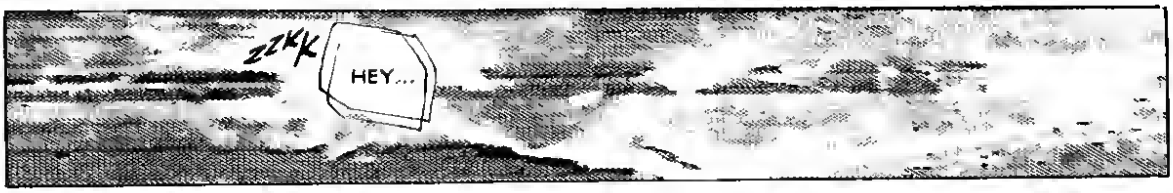
IMAGINE, IF YOU WILL, THE "YOU" THAT EXISTS IN TORU SOMA'S MIND, AND THE "TORU SOMA" THAT EXISTS IN YOUR MIND...
JUST AS IN BIOLOGY A BASAL ARRAY ADAPTS IN LIFE, THE ACT OF ADAPTING IS CALLED EN, OR KARMIC CONNECTIVITY.

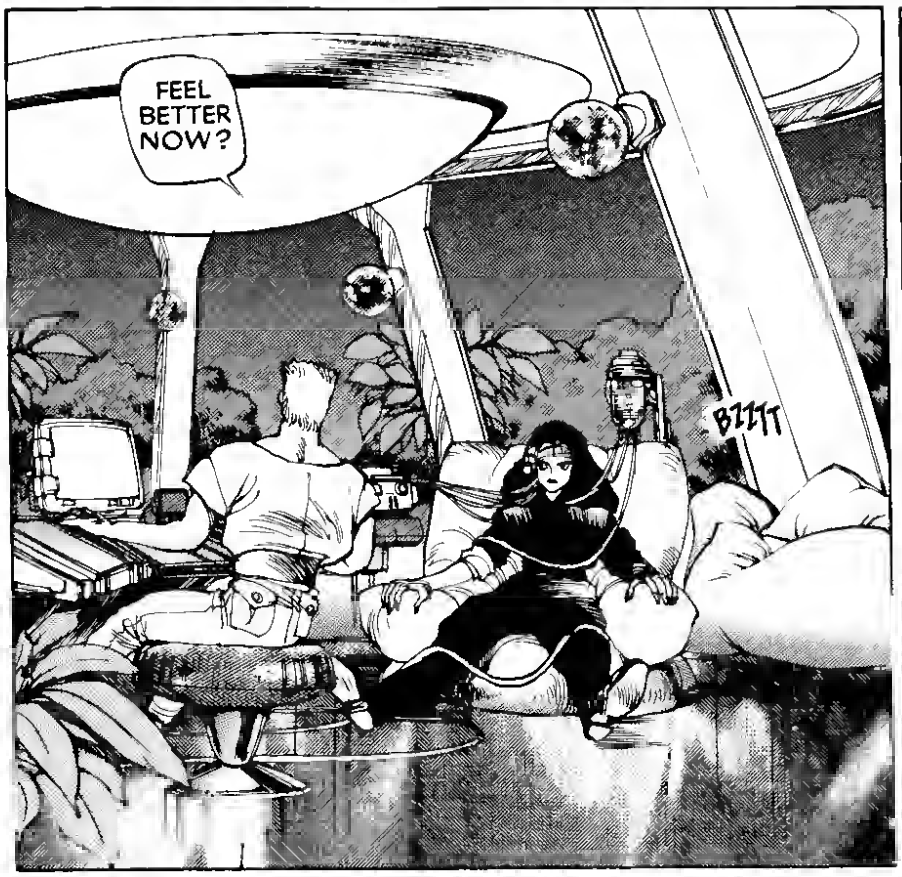

IN THIS CASE, AS WITH RNA TRANSFER, THE INTENT TO KILL IS SYNTHESIZED, AND REMAINS.


HERE YOU ARE ASKING ME TO "MARRY" A LIFE FORM CONSISTING OF NOTHING BUT INTELLIGENCE, BECAUSE OF "KARMIC CONNECTION"...


YES. THIS WILL ALLOW ME TO BECOME A TRUE LIFE FORM...
LET'S FUSE TOGETHER LIKE FLOWING CLOUDS, BECOME A PART OF THE UNCERTAIN BUT DIVERSE WORLD...







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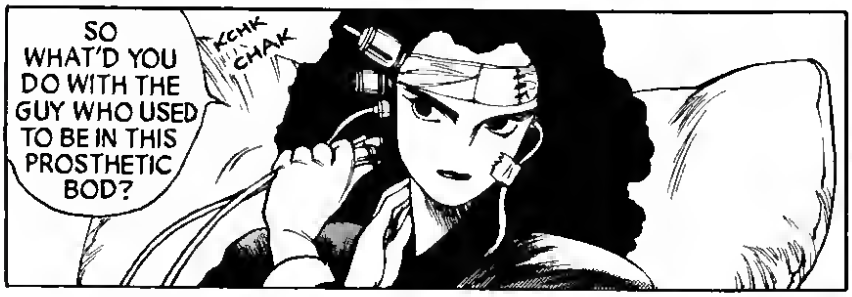
IT'S 21:34 ON SEPTEMBER 22, AND YER IN MY VERY OWN SAFE HOUSE.
HUH... THIS IS THE MICHELANGELO III STYLE THAT WAS POPULAR FOUR YEARS BACK...
HMPHH!

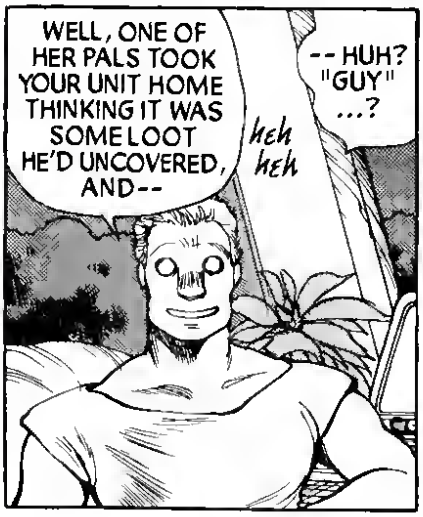
THAT ALL YOU CAN SAY?
NOTHIN' ELSE FOR POOR OL' BATOU?

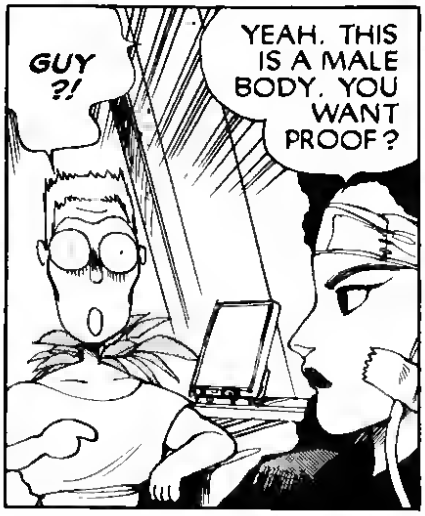
THANKS FOR THE EFFORT...

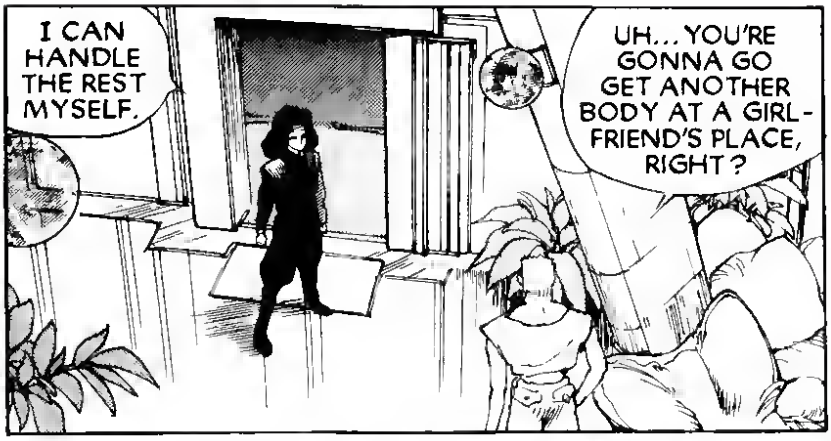
...
BOO!

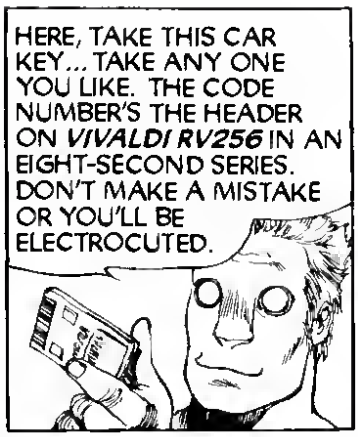

SO WHAT'D YOU DO WITH THE GUY WHO USED TO BE IN THIS PROSTHETIC BOD?
KCHK CHAK

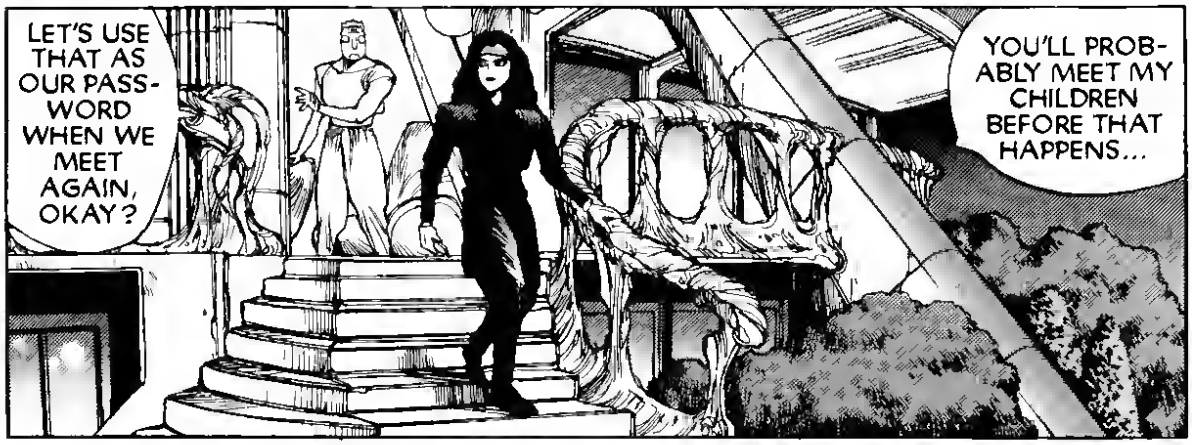
M-MALE ??!
SO THAT'S WHY YER VOICE WAS LOW?!
WALKING FEELS STRANGE...


WELL, ONE OF HER PALS TOOK YOUR UNIT HOME THINKING IT WAS SOME LOOT HE'D UNCOVERED, AND--
heh heh
-- HUH? "GUY" ...?


GUY ?!
YEAH. THIS IS A MALE BODY. YOU WANT PROOF?


I CAN HANDLE THE REST MYSELF.
UH... YOU'RE GONNA GO GET ANOTHER BODY AT A GIRL-FRIEND'S PLACE, RIGHT?


HERE, TAKE THIS CAR KEY... TAKE ANY ONE YOU LIKE. THE CODE NUMBER'S THE HEADER ON *VIVALDI RV256* IN AN EIGHT-SECOND SERIES. DON'T MAKE A MISTAKE OR YOU'LL BE ELECTROCUTED.


LET'S USE THAT AS OUR PASS-WORD WHEN WE MEET AGAIN, OKAY?
YOU'LL PROB-ABLY MEET MY CHILDREN BEFORE THAT HAPPENS...

"CHILDREN" ...? YOU GOT *KIDS?!*
YOU MEAN IN AN EGG BANK?

LOOK-- MAYBE I MADE A WRONG CONNECTION AN' IT SCREWED UP YER HEAD--
FWHAP!

SO WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU, UH, "FUSE"...?
YOU'LL FIND OUT...
YA DINT HAFTA *HIT* ME!
FIND OUT WHAT?

I WAS CONTACTED BY AN *AI* THAT CALLED ITSELF A LIFE-FORM, AND IT PROPOSED THAT WE FUSE TOGETHER.
I ACCEPTED.

THAT THIS IS THE COSMIC SPECIES-- THE SEED...
"A HIGHLY EFFICIENT PACKAGE OF INFORMATION..." THE GREATNESS OF LIFE...

THERE YA GO, SPOUTING NONSENSE AGAIN.
SO--WHERE'RE YA GONNA GO NOW? BACK TO SECTION NINE?

GO? BEATS ME, BUD.
HEH-HEH...

AHH... THE NET IS VAST....

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# AUTHOR'S NOTES

**Pg. 17** Hacker: a computer criminal who infiltrates other cyberbrains, steals information, manipulates data and programs, plants viruses, and otherwise corrupts them. The penalty for genius hackers who can infiltrate ghosts (souls or psyches) is particularly harsh.

**Pg. 20** When you copy a page of something, the original doesn't disappear, and in the same way, information isn't really lost when it's "stolen" in this story. The only way you can really know it's stolen is by detecting when an improper contact is taking place – and it's hard to tell if it's really improper or not – or when there is some indication that others have the information (this requires an assumption). Since those who stole it will – obviously – pretend they didn't and will manipulate the data, information wars become extraordinarily difficult. There can be multiple rulers existing simultaneously in the cyberbrain world, and their power is determined by the number of "keys" they have to access each network and by their ability to break through defensive barriers. The problem is the great number of code keys, or barrier-breaking ability, and the information processing power, not the size of the database. There's no use having a huge amount of information; if it's always being controlled, the network can still be cut off whenever desired. Ideally, one exerts the necessary controls at the necessary times, in a way that it won't be discovered. In order to be able to respond to changes in information, rather than concentrating it at one location, it's also better to decentralize and redistribute it. That also means if there's an accident or disaster, damage will be kept to a minimum. In other words, the nervous system of a cyberbrain person is his or her own individual network.

**Pg. 27** Regarding the antenna function of the brain: one thing people (or what might better be called "spirits") were originally capable of was a type of "channeling" that allowed them to synchronize with the external universe and make contact with the internal universe and with *kiko* energy, things easily understood as phenomena. For cyborgs whose bodies are almost completely machines, it's simple to put their sensory mechanisms in a sleep state, so when they run a "scientific" cyberbrain synch, they can easily enter a quasi-channeling state. (Maybe I'm the only one who thinks this way, but when people talk about the mentally disturbed or schizophrenic person hearing "broadcasts" or "voices," it might be related to this phenomenon.)

**Pg. 36** Most types of artificial blood being considered are white in color; androids in recent science fiction have white blood. In my story, however, in view of the antenna-effect and magnetism influence, I've given my android red blood with an iron component. The liquid that the neurochips are soaking in, by the way, is neither red blood nor white blood but a nearly transparent, artificial spinal fluid. Blood products apparently never flow directly into the human brain due to the "blood-brain barrier," and I've heard this is a special mechanism to ensure that foreign substances in the blood never directly attack the brain.

**Pg. 37** Regarding Batou's lines on page 36: Personally, I think all things in nature have "ghosts." This is a form of pantheism, and similar to ideas found in Shinto or among believers in the Manitou. Because of the complexity and function, and the physical constraints they have when they appear as a physical phenomenon, it may be impossible to scientifically prove this. There are, after all,

humans who act more like robots than robots, and one cannot say for certain that they have no ghosts just because they don't act like it. In ancient times, neither air nor the universe were believed to exist. Just for reference, I should state that not all ghosts are the same in terms of complexity or effect.

**Pg. 46** Japan currently has no "Ministry of Internal Affairs." The police in Japan are headed by a state minister and a five-member National Public Safety Commission (including the prime minister). In *Ghost in the Shell*, politics aren't the main theme, so to make things less confusing, and because I like the way the British do things, I've created a Foreign Ministry and a Ministry of Internal Affairs. England has shadow cabinets, a term that has awfully negative underworld connotations in Japanese, so I don't like it, but I hope our opposition parties in Japan operate like that someday.

**Pg. 50** Government departments in Japan generally start drawing up their rough budget requests for the next year in April. (It's another way of saying "gimme money.") The end of August is the Ministry of Finance's deadline. At the end of the year, the Ministry of Finance then presents a revised budget to the Cabinet and shows it to each ministry and agency. This is, in other words, the ministry's request to "hold the line at point x..." Upon accepting this, the head honchos, on up to vice ministers, at each ministry and agency start negotiating to try to restore whatever amount they can (with howls of protest and requests for a chance to explain further). Then the Minister of Finance presents the final draft to the Cabinet, and the Cabinet presents it to the diet, or (one hopes!) Parliament. In this story, however, the budget for Motoko's unit is part of a secret, "black" fund...

**Pg. 57** Endorno is the brand name of a virtual-experience software designed for E-brain cyborgs. It allows several members of the same sex to share in the enjoyment of a sexual experience, on several lines simultaneously. ("Multi" refers to the experiences of three people on one line). It's mainly illegal pornography that's experienced. There are obviously some harmful effects, but the stuff continues to be used in an underground network. Motoko Kusanagi has a particularly advanced prosthetic body, and for her it's a highly profitable side business. (P.S., it doesn't work on the opposite sex, for obvious reasons...)

Humans are said to have the following: pain points: 102–142 /cm; pressure points: 25/cm$^2$; cold points: 636/cm$^2$; warm points: 0–3/cm$^2$.

**Pg. 58** Batou's exclamation about drugs here occurs because he's synchronizing with major quantities of endorphins and other neuro drugs. It doesn't mean he's actually using the drugs. E-brain sex doesn't work in such a traditional way. It is possible to do a variety of creative things by further mastering the program, but in these drawings I unfortunately opted to depict easy-to-understand situations rather than the concept. The blue fluid depicted on the previous page is a program that amplifies sensation...

**Pg. 59** For safety reasons, and to prevent information leaks, all of them, including Major Kusanagi, live in more than one place – in downtown apartments, suburban condos, company housing, and hotel rooms, etc. During their e-brain sex, they've turned off their connection to the outside network to thwart hackers from jamming the system. If someone has their e-brain key, however, they can still establish direct contact. Batou is

suffering because his brain is receiving sensory signals from an organ he doesn't even possess... Some people may be repelled by the thought of slugs fornicating, but there is an unusual carnal beauty involved which is worth looking into.

**Pg. 60** The foreign minister's references to "E" ranking – "6 for need and 1 for difficulty" – is something I made up. (It's such an insulting way of putting it; normally, I'm sure the minister would just say they're a tiny country not worth worrying about.) The protrusions above and below the helicopter nose are wire cutters. Just to clarify: wire cutters are not a fancy new secret weapon. They've been around for some time and are used as a guard against power lines and the cruel booby traps often employed in urban warfare, the wires that are strung to stop jeeps by decapitating the drivers, or the helos that snarl props, causing a crash. Also, this is a post-war scenario, and still fairly dangerous, so the VIPs have to be protected in a variety of ways. (Now, don't any of you readers go stringing wires to stop off-road bikes! It's dangerous, dammit! My brother-in-law was nearly killed by that.) I'm not sure what the minister means about Malles sending aid. It's a mystery.

**Pg. 61** "DDA" refers to the Dfficial Development Assistance, or Foreign Aid Ministry. (This is the problem agency, the one we wish would use our taxes more efficiently!) The foreign minister's comments about the DDA are probably a better way of looking at the situation, rather than just thinking of it as an "invasion using economic power instead of weapons." As long as the DDA fails to properly understand the countries it's supposed to be aiding, it will probably just be spinning its wheels. (Of course, the recipient countries are also responsible for this lack of understanding.) "Gavel" may sound like a weird name for a nation, but that's because it's more than a nation. Dne of the sub-themes of this story is that Gavel has taken on the name of a giant conglomerate or capital group. (About the DDA: since Japan did make a mess out of Asia in the past, and this is still having an effect on the area, it's probably best to regard the aid as a type of compensation for past exploitation... If one simply chooses to ignore Japan's efforts, that is.)

**Pg. 64** The "pinhead" referred to is, as one might assume, the ability to hit the head of a pin 100% of the time. For a short-barreled gun, 100 yards is probably the limit. I think this shooter would almost have to be a genius, but I used this figure because I don't think it's completely impossible. Df course, it's important to remember that since she's a cyborg, one can almost completely ignore FRE (forearm recoil energy). Also, this score is obtained with a high muzzle-velocity gun that uses ultra-small-caliber ammunition. Dne of the selling points of the Seburo is that it doesn't jam, even when a cyborg's pulling the trigger, firing 12 rounds in three seconds...

**Pg. 65** Revolvers don't need to be loaded one cartridge at a time; some have speed loaders available that allow loading six at a time. Some can be fired quite fast in training, but if your target runs to the left while you're loading, you may lose the opportunity to fire. Under normal conditions, you probably wouldn't be able to fire at all. I'm sure you understand why. The Seburo, however, is a gun with an extremely reliable extractor and bullets with clean neck lines, so it rarely jams. It's an example of high-precision engineering in a small firearm. The AS11 referred to is supposed to be a Chinese assault rifle based on a Korean model.

**Pg. 66** "AI" stands for artificial intelligence. This is a field of research in computer science that studies not just business-related information processing, but intelligent functions. I think of it as a knowledge/information processing device that is not human. That is, artificial. Experts hold a variety of opinions on this.

**Pg. 70** Contagious medical waste, or bio-hazardous garbage, is often poorly handled and will become a major problem in the future. Not only are the associated costs astronomical, but terrorists may start using some of the disease-carrying material. Finding a solution – create a huge, high-temperature incinerator and collection specialists; the parks and recreation can come later – should be given top priority by local governments. And hospitals: are they really sealing this stuff properly and giving it to the right parties? From what I hear, the volume isn't that great... In the illustration, our senior citizen isn't being pecked by crows, probably because he's pickled in some sort of hazardous substance.

**Pg. 77** After this kind of conversation with Togusa, Major Kusanagi probably thinks it was a mistake to have head-hunted him from police headquarters. She believes the ability to sniff out criminal activity by intuition cannot be acquired through training or experience. She calls this "ghost-whispering" and likens it to the abilities possessed by schizophrenics or channelers.

**Pg. 87** In reality, might *usually* makes right, but there are those who, in reaction to this bleak reality, believe in the opposite ideal that might *shouldn't* make right. In trying to enforce their ideal, however, might or force often becomes necessary, thus showing how difficult it is to put ideals into practice. Also, in talking about what is right or just, whether with regard to groups or individuals, Muslim society or Christian society, etc., the different concepts of what is right lead each to view the other as evil. This makes the whole concept of right or wrong seem rather antiquated. If a consensus of the majority is all it takes to determine what is right, then having and controlling information becomes extraordinarily important.

**Pg. 98** A robot is a system – this includes computers – wherein a specific input, or instruction, results in a specific output, or performance. Some robots by themselves "can discriminate and perform multiple tasks to a certain extent." But robots are fundamentally different from androids. "Android" is a word that refers to the mecha that results when humans try to see if they can create humans using mechatronics. Conversely, it's a type of mecha that allows humans to mouth statements like, "humans are complex, but they are a system, so they can be replicated if only these components are put together in such and such a way."

**Pg. 99** AIs with prosthetic bodies probably never experience hunger, sexual desire, the desire to sleep, or even the desire for glory and honor, unless programmed to do so. If they have any desire, it's probably to expand their network or create something or control something. In other words, to grow as an information system. This is something we may know in the near future, but have no way of determining now. I don't think there's an AI superior to a human in existence yet, but how should I know? I'm only a cartoonist! The definition of a human is very vague, so when an AI superior to a human is developed, the question is: will humans really be able to recognize it?

**Pg. 100** In looking at a book on brain death, it appears that whether a ghost attaches itself to a body or not is determined partly by the activities of the cerebrum and the lower part of the thalamus. Generally speaking, what we refer to as the "spirit" or "soul" is a very vague concept, including things programmed into, or closely related to, the physical body, such as memory, the results of chemical reactions, and emotions, etc.

**Pg. 102** I'm sure there's really no need to note this, but the amount of micromachines in the solution, the amount of current applied, and the length of time, etc., are all – allowing for some error – determined by the class of micromachines. There are different types of micromachines – those that react to pressure, changes in temperature, pain – which is difficult – and they are mixed into the solution at a fixed rate. Changing the ratio of micromachines makes it possible to make a particular sense more delicate. Furthermore, for cyborgs employed in special types of labor, it's also possible to create special skin senses – such as the ability to detect gases or magnetism – that humans do not possess.

**Pg. 105** These micromachines are a bio-type created using enzymes such as luciferase (what a fiendish-sounding name!), which is found among other things in the light-emitting organs of fireflies. (In reality, they're not black spots, of course.) Someone was supposed to have genetically engineered a Japanese killifish to produce luciferase. I wonder what happened to that idea?

Major Kusanagi is deliberately designed to look like a mass-production model so she won't be too conspicuous. In reality, her electrical and mechanical system is made of ultra-sophisticated materials unobtainable on the civilian market. If she appeared too expensive, she might be suddenly waylaid on a dark street some night, hacked up, and hauled off to be sold. "Custom models" here implies models with a prosthetic design created by a professional artist. For such cyborgs, an artist designs everything from the shape of the mechanical components to the external appearance. It is not unusual for designer-cyborgs to be over-stressed, or to have a variety of design imbalances, sometimes with grotesque results.

**Pg. 107** $16^2$ indicates that the micromachines used for skin sensation are extremely tiny. Since obtaining these is an act of treason and thus is not available on the open market, this is something that Major Kusanagi has secretly obtained. It's clear that these women are manufacturing products of extremely high precision, but it's impossible to determine if the precision is the result of the $16^2$. We can assume, however, that they are using micromachines even more advanced than those on the open market. The women, therefore, don't have to worry that someone will find out what they're doing.

**Pg. 108** What do total cyborgs eat? I imagine that initially, cyborgs consumed small quantities of a paste-like substance or pills, but – partly for psychological reasons – by the time of this story, they are shown eating synthetic food such as shown here, with a "normal appearance and oral sensation," including taste. Fuchikomas, on the other hand, can last for two months by merely replenishing their tanks with a fluid mixed specially for neurochips. (Or let's assume so.) Fuchikomas aren't pure bio-robots, however.

**Pg. 110** This is not an E-brain space or virtual reality, but a 3-D video room. Colonel Tonoda

is on a platform like a huge room-runner, the orientation of which is adjustable. He's surrounded by a dome-shaped room, with scenery simulated using a retinal-projection on the white, screen-like walls. Others would not see the view he does. Golf simulators using a similar, but much cruder principle exist today.

**Pg. 117** "One life is more precious than all the stars in the heavens," or so the saying goes, but it's just a noble sentiment. In reality, a planet is worth far more than even a race of beings, including human, and thinking otherwise is a manifestation of the arrogant attitude we humans have that makes us ignore other life-forms. I hate the saying. I do have respect for human life, but I'm just trying to say that it's not as important as a whole star.

**Pg. 120** The activity of cells creates order, forming organisms, human bodies, and groups of individuals. Just as at each level, every one of these things has its own phase – if that's the right word – the phrase about the "world turning" refers to the overall speed of people's activities. This doesn't necessarily imply there is a larger, overriding conscious "world." Although they are of completely different scale, I use the words "god" and "spirit" in a similar way. Channelers are said to "speak with the will of the gods," but I don't think this means a human-like god speaks to the channeler. I think a special phase that we call "god" merely syncs with the channeler's linguistic field, physical functions, etc.

**Pg. 121** In the future, perhaps such advanced, high-precision robots (almost all androids) would not really be discarded so easily. But only a few years ago, who would have believed that the office and audio/video equipment we now take for granted would become so common? Frankly, I doubt that true humanoid robots will become so popular. If they were mass marketed, it would probably be with a leasing system, and there would be monthly inspections. Don't forget though, that nowadays when machinery's been used for five or six years, it's scrapped or sold cheaply to other countries. The same thing's true for consumer goods with AI functions built into them.

**Pg. 123** Trichophyton and Claviceps are names of fungi. For those who want to know more, refer to W. D. Gray's *The Relationship of Fungi to Human Affairs*. There's no deep significance in using these names, but they were convenient for telling a story with lots of creepy elements. In order to keep up in the next century, Japan has got to develop micromachines and VLSI technology, and, to do that, sterilization and anti-fungi technologies will also be essential. Fungi applications and cyborgization, or using genetic engineering, will become an important theme.

**Pg. 127** For readers who demand realism, I should note that a cyborg such as the Hanka president – a master-slave, dualistic heart-mind type – probably would not function properly or be able to exist unless it had simulated internal organ signals in a fairly realistic way. We humans are normally taught to distinguish between the body and the mind, but we shouldn't forget that the brain is part of a neural net that runs through the entire body, and thus, is part of the overall system. I read a report from somewhere about an experiment that indicated, "it is possible to mechanize part of the system [the human body], but when most of the end-terminals in the system are removed, output from the autonomic nervous system practically vanishes." In this story, I'm assuming that signals in artificial, prosthetic systems have been developed to a very high level.

**Pg. 130** This is a trivial point, but rifle bullets, as we all know, are very fast, usually faster than sound, depending on distance, performance, and muzzle velocity, of course. As a result, I've deliberately avoided showing bullets strike after indicating the sound. Given the way I've drawn the rifle in this section, it wouldn't really matter, I suppose, but I did it anyway, which is a bad habit of mine. In this scene, Togusa was supposed to fire back two or three rounds and dash – with Batou covering him – which would have let the pair reach the bottom of the building faster.

**Pg. 134** The man's words in panel 7 have no particular meaning. He's just trying to get Batou's attention, and while some people might understand him, the main thing he's trying to convey is hostility. Since it works, it may be a type of incantation. He's assumed that Batou and Togusa are police from the way Togusa yelled "Freeze!" at him.

**Pg. 139** In movie scenes of special forces making indoor assaults, one often sees several people with guns drawn, charging down a hallway. They'd have to be really "special" forces to do so (ha-ha). In reality, they usually peek around a corner first and then, depending on the situation, make their move (like they did in *CI5* and *The Silence of the Lambs*). In the old days, they probably used a dental mirror or something. The most important thing is to make sure you have the advantage before the enemy spots you and to not just start blasting away. The real firing should be done as support or when moving.

**Pg. 140** Normally, I hate the sort of expository lines used in the second panel and try to avoid using them, but for *Ghost in the Shell*, I've forced myself to make an exception. The name "Gosseyn" is taken from A. E. van Vogt's science-fiction novel *The World of Null-A*. Adam and Link are similarly inspired by Eando Binder's *Adam Link – Robot*. If the "ghost" is a "phase" or "phenomenon," I suppose during dubbing, the original could disappear and something different would be born in its place. Regarding the smuggling, there may be those who would say this wouldn't be necessary, that Hanka would be able to breed the kids themselves, but let's assume that the food, etc., is too expensive and they've therefore decided to use stolen goods.

**Pg. 143** The boss is mistaken when he talks about the death penalty here. At the time of the story, it doesn't exist anymore. Personally, I think the death penalty should only be considered on a case-by-case basis and that it's not right to lump all those who commit crimes under the broad term of "criminals." I'm not a devotee of Hammurabi, but I do worry about giving too many advantages to the perpetrators of crimes. Perhaps people should be sentenced to "death by execution, with punishment delayed if activities benefiting society are earnestly pursued."

**Pg. 144** Regarding fleeing the country, I remember seeing the following on the news once: a serial killer sentenced to death in the United States fled to and was captured in Canada, which has no death penalty. In Canada, the argument erupted as to whether it was constitutional to return the man to the U.S., knowing that he would probably be executed. Learning of this, several highly sadistic serial killers – some of whose victims' bodies had not been found – remarked that "truly civilized nations don't have the death penalty." I don't know the upshot of that particular

case, but clearly, civilized nations with great respect for human rights are beloved by criminals so vile they wouldn't even appear in a comic book. Whatever happened to "crime and punishment"?

**Pg. 145** Regarding ordnance and equipment: in this scenario, it's being jointly managed and developed by multiple corporations. Individuals and units are simply not capable of handling the guns, prosthetic bodies, manufacturing parts requiring special materials, doing replacements and maintenance, and maintaining the equipment in the ultra-clean plants that are required.

**Pg. 152** The gun has a catch, about two centimeters above the ejection port, that throws the cartridges forward, but for right-side ejection, it ought to be possible to design a little catch, nowhere near as big as a kicker, that would scatter them downward. (What? You don't think that's a good idea?)

**Pg. 153** We won't go into detail here about the fact that a two-hour retroactive check was done later on Fuchikoma's external input record. No evidence of hacker break-in was found, but this in and of itself does not guarantee that none occurred; it merely means that operations continue, with an added element of uncertainty. I'm also not sure if an AI would really understand the concept of "profound" or not. It's used here to indicate that the information is given high priority when categorized.

**Pg. 156** Methuselah is a name from the Bible and has the connotation of someone who's lived a very long time. It's not the Soviet woman's name. "Comrade" already sounds old-fashioned, but I decided to leave it in anyway.

**Pg. 158** As far as the Northern Islands are concerned, it would be great if both the Japanese people who used to live there and the Soviets who live there now could somehow coexist. But when it comes down to an either/or situation, each side always claims historical precedent and nothing's ever resolved. Japan can assert its claim to the islands all it wants, but the assertion won't do any good as long as it's just a gesture. If only we could use all the energy expended on arguing on finding a new solution! Do we really need to defend our rights to the point of ignoring the entire Soviet Union? I know Gorby's in an unstable position and can't really develop a long-term strategy to solve the situation... but heck, the Soviets are taking too many fish in the area. (*Editor's note: this commentary was written in 1989.*)

**Pg. 160** For the moment, forget that with anti-HERO measures implemented – "HERO," or Hazards of Electromagnetic Radiation to Ordnance, refers to the damage that EMF can cause to electro-mechanical components – both the helicopter and Fuchikoma would have been switched to manual mode, the attack barrier mode would have been activated to prevent cyberbrain hacking, and the main switches would also have been cut. Also, the Bertrave cityscape is comprised of skyscrapers two kilometers high, creating a disorienting sense of scale. For instance, 1,221 meters of Mt. Bertrave are completely blocked from view by the buildings. In the drawing on this page, the mountain is rendered at around 4,500 meters above sea level, with the metropolis sprawling 11-12 kilometers out on either side. Or something like that.

**Pg. 196** Yano's family was notified only that he had "died in training" or was merely "deceased." Families are never told the details

or the truth of when, where, or how members die. At least this is better than learning about it years later, with the body somewhere unknown all that time. There are also times when deaths are reported prematurely, before a confirmation has been made, and the person is actually still alive. And, of course, there are times when death notices are sent out merely for strategic reasons.

**Pg. 198** In distributed systems engineering, there's apparently no concept of "redundancy" in a group. To remove the old micromachines – let's say one has to inject "C" parts – reverse the adsorption, make them rotate, apply a centrifugal force of 5 x $10^{-4}$ dyne/cell to strip them off, and then suck them out with a magnet. (Given the blood-brain barrier, it's probably not a good idea to try to run them into the bloodstream and expel them that way.)

**Pg. 205** Of course, in reality our pair would have been burned to a crisp and left without hair, clothes, or skin, but I don't show this because it would make things too confusing later on. To compensate, though, I've put an aquarium at the edge of the door, right next to the Major's boyfriend, and I've added a bathroom that's hidden by her. (I know it's normally supposed to be next to the door when you enter and that this still doesn't make up for it, but hey! Sue me!)

**Pg. 207** Armored suit: A type of bullet-resistant, fire-resistant suit, completely covering the body and consisting of an external shell of compound materials and four battery-powered limbs for locomotion that mimic human movements using master - slave technology. Although referred to by different names, some dangerous and impractical toys of a similar nature have been developed of late.

**Pg. 212** This is a pretty classic way to avoid being tailed, but it probably wouldn't work for true pros. Normally, a 24-hour tail requires considerable manpower to prepare for all eventualities; it takes careful planning. If trains or buses are being used, shifts of people going in and out of the next three or four stations are needed. If cars are being used, it requires people covering either side of the road on which the suspect is driving. In reality, of course, these operations rarely go by the book because it's impossible to prepare adequately, to get all the people required or the budget to support them. In theory, I suppose, true pros are supposed to get as close as possible to textbook situations. Using split-second judgment to station two or three henchmen is one way to get around some of these problems.

**Pg. 223** "HV" refers to actual ultra-high performance, high-velocity armor-piercing shells. In this story, after FN manufactured advanced P90 weaponry, these shells were developed for handguns and submachine guns. HV bullets are small caliber, providing low recoil and high penetration power, but they don't have very good stopping power against humans because they go right through them. Since these bullets are very effective against bulletproof vests, light armor, cyborgs, etc., in *Ghost in the Shell* they're fairly common but generally not available to civilians. The Seburo™ firearms our heroes carry use HV shells. Armored weaponry, like the think-tank that appears here, is necessary to go up against HV shells.

**Pg. 226** Only a total cyborg can undertake this sort of high jump. If a partial cyborg with mechanical legs or limbs tried it, this would probably cause a rupture where flesh and machine parts are joined. Although a different level of

analogy, it's sort of like the situation with artificial human bones of the $MgO-CaO-SiO_2-P_2O_5$ glass variety, currently very popular. This material is reportedly between four to seventeen times more elastic than human bone, but because concentrated stress creates a problem, physicians apparently use something closer to actual human bones for better overall balance. In real life, of course, cyborgs are apparently being developed, not with "superpowers," but artificial tissues that attempt a substitution for bioactive materials.

**Pg. 237** Regarding Major Kusanagi's unnamed boyfriend, what looks like a bandage or a towel is actually a collagen seal designed to stop the bleeding. We'll pretend here that it's the same as an actual product currently being sold by Avitene Inc. in the United States. There is a book (available only in Japanese), published by Shogakukan on blood coagulants, titled *Jintai no Shori*, or "Victory for the Human Body," that lists for about $60.00 (ack!) but has lots of photographs and is interesting reading.

**Pg. 238** When traffic accidents are used to assassinate people, the assassinations are extremely hard to detect. Of course, sophisticated techniques are required to make sure the assassin is unhurt while the target is killed, but I won't list them here as it might be dangerous – I don't want anyone to try them out! The fact that assassinations are used in *Ghost in the Shell* means there has been a failure in the political process. It's like rape, I suppose. If you see one happening before your eyes, you're not going to be able to talk the rapist out of it. You'll probably have to use force to stop the perpetrator. Ideally, that should happen before, not after, the rape takes place. Sad, but true.

**Pg. 241** In the hour and a half before the incident was reported, assume that a thorough attempt was made to detect operator input errors, but that it wasn't possible to turn the power off because of delivery schedules and the need to protect the robot body.

**Pg. 243** The "soul" that Batou is referring to here represents a fairly simple collection of energy, a relatively low-level spiritual structure – what I would have referred to as a "low harmonic level" in *Orion* – as opposed to a true "ghost," which is the higher level spirit attached to human bodies. "Manitou" and other "spirits" exist on an even more elevated plane and resemble what we call "gods" in the generic sense. The spirit world is infinite in its range, but from our perspective it includes everything from just below humans – from residual memories to simple insect and animal spirits – to way above humans (macrocosmic spirits at the limits of human imagination). Like human inner space, the spirit world is not vertically ordered in a hierarchy of control. Instead, the upper level is the sum of the activities of multiple sections. The same principle also applies, I suspect, to politics and ecosystems. Of course, if you select specific, individual levels to examine independently, then the entire structure appears to have a master-slave/top-down control aspect to it, but one suspects that the act of selection itself is what yields the materialistic conclusions to which people often come. If concentrated thought creates matter, molecules, chemical compounds, cells, organisms, and systems, then there is also a mode at each level of the hierarchy capable of bundling it all together.

**Pg. 247** In this story, people of Willis' generation are often not directly linked with cyberbrains because they don't want their own brains fiddled

with by cyberbrain doctors young enough to be their children. But since this also limits their dealings with the world, they try to bridge the gap through cyborgization. Willis is a good example.

**Pg. 254** It gets harder to tail in the rain because of decreased visibility, but optical camouflage becomes easier to detect (especially when moving at high speeds). Opto-cam tailing is a trademark of S-9. Batou is following two cars behind the target car.

**Pg. 268** Cyberbrain space and cyberspace are often depicted as glowing, three-dimensional graphs. This is an easy-to-understand representation, but I think cyberbrain space consists of something far more conceptual, something beyond and unrelated to our visual and audio senses. Of course, it's all right to use audio-visual representations, but the conversion seems inefficient and ultimately meaningless. After all, there is no form or sound in the cyberbrain world. And besides, we're talking about something that doesn't even exist yet – virtual reality still relies on the five human senses for its replication and thus isn't a true cyberspace – so this is all really meaningless speculation. Still, it's fun to imagine what it would be like.

**Pg. 269** For those wanting to know more about saccades, etc., rather than a book specifically on biology, I recommend an interesting work titled *Sensors and the Eyes of Living Things*, edited by Kajuro Shimizu and published by the Information Survey Association, 1985. This book – which I've recommended before – describes not how we see things with our eyes, but how we "see" light information that comes through our eyes with our brains. (Note: this book is presently only available in Japanese.)

**Pg. 271** I drew the final panel the way I did just to make it easier to understand. The core memory is by no means the core of the Puppeteer; he is the total system itself. Generally speaking, when we refer to specific "individuals," we're not referring to their brains, but to their entire body. A "ghost" in this case refers to the state of the entire body-system (it might even be called a "phase") and not to a bundle of energy in the object called a "brain," although it may be a place created by energy. In our story, the "self" that the Puppeteer refers to is an integration of information that has reached a specific level of complexity, shifted, and created a phase called "life."

**Pg. 273** According to some psychics, depending on the situation, even the spirit that we think of as the "self" (a "phase" of the system, perhaps?), may actually change mode, from thought or physical self, to a level where it is being influenced or controlled by a guardian deity, a protectorate spirit, or an original spirit, etc. If we're talking about infinite free holons in both lower and upper levels, then inner space and outer space continue *ad infinitum*. Shinto also considers things in terms of three stages – the *ikumusubi* or conscious self, the *tarumusubi* or unconscious self, and the *tamazumemusubi* or the self that transcends self.

**Pg. 274** Just as one cannot see the layout of the entire vascular system with a micro-endoscope floating in the middle of a capillary, Major Kusanagi is unable to see the exact image drawn in these panels. She would only be able to see it if she had a map of the entire system sent to her from an observational "satellite," or external source. It's sort of like the game where you put your hand in a box with a maze and with your eyes closed try to imagine what it looks like, or the way that in a dream you don't know

the exact location of all the roads or buildings in a scene; at least most people don't. In a cyberbrain network, distance and specific locations can almost be ignored, especially when the hardware is wired. The more I try to visualize it, the more this type of depiction loses meaning, I suppose.

**Pg. 275** Some readers may think that Aramaki should first use Batou and then call for outside help instead of the other way around. For the sake of clarity, let me explain. I thought that if Major Kusanagi were in trouble, and Batou did a brain dive using the same method and technology and barrier, especially since he'd be using his own barrier this time, he'd only run into the same problem. In this story, the winners and losers are not determined by guts and passion but on a digital level by the "system" and the voltage. There's no real struggle or contest; a split-second flow determines the winner.

**Pg. 277** In this case, the electrons and the magnetic force that Major Kusanagi is referring to have the same relationship as patterns and backgrounds do. I realize that Kusanagi's bit about "electron traces" is a little unclear, but it's just her way of saying it.

**Pg. 279** The Puppeteer has discovered that at each tier, the relationship between quanta creates a phase. This is also a discovery of self. "The self as part of the whole" used to consist of a relationship such as "the complex structure of natural things ÷ a part of nature," but now, phases such as society, corporations, and the state are also powerful. Most religions have anthropomorphized the upper level of the system they believe in, and thus think of it as a sort of lord over the decision-making process, but like the relationship between the mind and the body, this is not really a higher-level control. It should be thought of as a phase (mode) of the totality.

**Pg. 283** What do you think are the top three events in history? In the context of the story, Major Kusanagi is thinking of the discovery of fire, electronics, or electricity, and the creation of life. I realize these are kind of vague! I know that some people would probably list the wheel, computers, nuclear energy, or writing, language, or death, which is a big one. All are important. In my way of thinking, fire differentiated man from apes, and electronics includes information processing by computers. I can understand why some people would leave out physical tools, but not including language and writing systems (and symbols), and especially death? Well . . .

**Pg. 284** The fact that I have a lot of religious references in my comics recently – *Orion* is another example – has nothing to do with the popularity of new religions in Japan. I include the reference because I think that as society ages and enters an era where high-tech and philosophical problems are increasingly intertwined – issues regarding brain death and the environment – organized religion is one of our biggest obstacles. At the start of the twenty-first century, around the time a savior is prophesied to return, I believe the fusion of science and religion is going to be one of the most critical issues facing us. Religion will have a huge role in issues of abortion, blood transfusions, bio-meat for consumption, and the use of fetuses and the dead for bio parts.

**Pg. 286** Kusanagi's skull is made with a titanium shell, and she has a large number of prosthetic enhancements, so she really does

have to worry about sinking. But not all cyborgs sink – some models are designed to float with special foam-based materials.

**Pg. 288** Y-3 does not refer to a submarine but to a cyborg in the *shape* of one, covered with muscle tissue on both sides, extending back to a tail.

**Pg. 293** Gertex is a coined term. It's a Czech-manufactured plastic explosive (PE), second in popularity only to Semtex. A real headache for security, it can't be detected by sensors at airports, yet only ten ounces of it can blow a 747 to smithereens. Gertex does not exist in the real world.

**Pg. 297** Use of strategic, nuclear weapons is referred to as "H. (high) I.C.," traditional warfare is referred to as "M. (middle) I.C.," and conflicts involving low levels of destruction are referred to as being "L.I.C."

There are examples of this type of exchange in the British Parliament, but in Japan, with its shadowy back-room politics, it seems highly improbable.

**Pg. 300** If you're confused, this is Kusanai's Section One boyfriend from chapter eight.

**Pg. 303** MOSSAD is the world-famous Israeli intelligence agency which – in the era of this story – has gone a little soft.

**Pg. 314** Japan used to have a jury system, but it was suspended, not abolished, in 1943. November 1, 1990 is the one-hundredth anniversary of Japan's modern judicial system. In recent years, there has been a movement to reconsider the use of jury trials and other forms of citizen participation in the legal system.

**Pg. 329** Kusanagi and Batou's car is obviously not from Public Security's vehicle department. Nor is it one of many they've hidden throughout the city. They're simply driving a stolen car. They've removed the plates and replaced them with their own, and these plates are forged versions of VIP numbers that they've researched. It's one of young Batou's clever little ideas. He figures that if any problems occur, it'll at least make the authorities hesitate before responding.

**Pg. 332** Major Kusanagi is worried about the vehicles in panel three because she can't imagine multiple thieves breaking into such a large facility and carrying off everything they steal on foot. In addition to the three dead thieves, she thinks someone else must have fled in a vehicle. Of course, there's always the possibility that there were only three thieves who came on foot and really did plan to carry out the loot, but since they're dead, she doesn't have to worry about that situation.

**Pg. 333** Panels four and five show a screw-activated switch, the type used in bomb casings. But in this era, the system is electronically activated with only a half-turn because shape-memory alloy wire is used. As a result, the easiest way to dispose of bombs is to cover them with a titanium shell and blow them up.

**Pg. 334** It's not clear in this story whether the actual metal body was corroded when the mold attacked the aluminum alloy coating, but when Batou sees the mold-covered mechanism he says, "**Mold?!** On an **aluminum compound**?!" Given the setting, it may be the result of a micromachine – in this case a microcrobial robot – weapon, but I for one certainly hope that such a weapon is never manufactured. (How irresponsible of me to believe this without basis.)

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**Pg. 336** In panel five, Batou is not trying to hide in a locker. He's entered a secret passageway through an opening disguised as a locker. In reality, there's a huge duct right under the locker, so they've really just carved a hole in the duct and closed and locked off the other entrances.

**Pg. 338** Concerning the fissioning pyramid indicated with protons (yangerons): this is a diagram of a system, so it ignores the actual numbers at each different level. As with powers of ten, in terms of size, the progression would be [microscopic constructions → human size → heavenly body size], but in terms of structural complexity it would instead be [microscopic constructions → heavenly body size → human size], which is also the order in which they were actually created. In this sense, in the third panel on the next page the more one enters the middle region, the newer and more complex the system becomes. Please view it as being in the realm of "human size." In other words, from the level of complexity, it's inevitable that the micro and macro worlds resemble each other.

**Pg. 339** I've read somewhere that in the very distant future, after $10^{107}$ seconds have elapsed, the material universe will become an extremely rarefied – and when I say "rarefied" here I mean really rarefied! – gas of electrons, positrons, and photons and will stabilize. With this kind of universe, it's hard not to start imagining such implausible things as the eternalness of God or spiritual trips unhindered by the speed of light.

**Pg. 342** I'm sure everyone is aware of the theory of the void-like nature of the galaxy, but the idea of a rotating universe is probably a product of my own vivid imagination. My reference to "moment" may be a completely inappropriate and silly analogy, but who knows what time is really like, anyway? In the second panel, in terms of a signal, I think that complete homogeneity would represent death. True randomness is something machines are actually better at than humans, so a "biased-randomness" in and of itself may be a characteristic of life.

**Pg. 343** For an interesting definition of life, I recommend von Neumann's ideas as described in "An Information Theory Definition of Life" in chapter 11 of the book by William Poundstone titled *The Recursive Universe: Cosmic Complexity and the Limits of Scientific Knowledge* Contemporary Books, Inc.. It has descriptions of everything from dead bodies to clones, but – what the heck – I wouldn't know how to classify an old man with dementia who's finished his genetic replication. Unless somebody can define holons, it seems to me that organ transplants will make this problem spiritually impossible to resolve. But if self-replication can be considered a life-form, then intelligence should be, too. The real problem is that "life" is a such an unscientific word.

**Pg. 344** The "altered-species/glider" that the Puppeteer is referring to probably includes the slack and "play" that he would gain as a result of incorporating Kusanagi. "Glider" has no specific meaning here... I know it's not ideal for this situation.

# AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

## SHIROW MASAMUNE

Shirow Masamune was born in Japan on Nov. 23, 1961. Shirow studied drawing and oil painting at the Osaka University of Art, and while there, he wrote and drew his first published comic, *Black Magic*, for fanzine *Atlas*.

After graduating, Shirow taught high-school art. During those years, he created *Appleseed*, the first volume of which was published in 1985 by Seishinsha. *Dominion* followed in 1986. That same year, *Appleseed* won the Galaxy Award – equivalent to the U.S. Hugo – for best science-fiction comic. Shirow continued to release volumes of *Appleseed* at regular intervals, until the publication of the fourth volume in 1989.

After assisting in the direction and character design of the *Black Magic M-66* animation video, Shirow began work on *Ghost in the Shell*. The first episode appeared in 1990 in Kodansha's *Young Magazine*. About this time, *Dominion* was made into an extremely successful animated video series, now available in English.

After writing and drawing several new episodes of *Appleseed*, Shirow decided to take a hiatus from producing the series he considers his "life's work." He had also been working for Fujimi Publishing on the *Neurohard* series, a "bible for a shared world" which, when complete, will serve as a blueprint other creators can follow to make animation, games, comics, etc., based on the world Shirow has created. In 1995, Shirow released *Dominion: Conflict 1*.

November of 1995 featured not only the release of the feature-film version of *Ghost in the Shell*, directed by Mamoru Oshii, but the initial chapter of the Shirow's *Ghost in the Shell* sequel, *Man-Machine Interface*. When finally collected in 2001, Shirow had completely re-imagined the original work, adding over 100 pages of stunning color art, utilizing state-of-the-art digital imaging unlike anything seen before in a work of graphic fiction. The *Ghost in the Shell* franchise again expanded in 2002 with the acclaimed animated TV series, *Stand Alone Complex*, and 2004 saw not only the release of another spectacular *Ghost in the Shell* animated feature, *Innocence* (again directed by Maroru Oshii), but a second adaptation of *Appleseed*, Japan's first full-length CGI film, directed by Shinji Aramaki.

Over the years, Shirow has produced a vast body of design and illustration work, much of this material being collected in the ongoing *Intron Depot* series of art books.

An extremely private individual – "Shirow Masamune" is a pseudonym – Shirow lives and works in Hyogo, Japan, following the loss of his house in the 1995 Kobe earthquake, enjoys reading, and keeps numerous spiders as pets.

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MANGA/SCIENCE FICTION

# GHOST IN THE SHELL
# 攻殻機動隊

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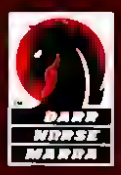

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